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ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

AS PERCEIVED BY ALBERTA PRINCIPALS

by



JOHN EDWARD ARNOT

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled, "Advantages and Disadvantages of the Semester System as Perceived by Alberta Principals," submitted by John Edward Arnot in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there were differences between (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, on perceived advantages and disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

Data for the study were obtained from questionnaires completed by 214 principals of secondary public and separate schools in the Province of Alberta whose schools contained all of grades ten, eleven and twelve. This return of 214 questionnaires represented 87 per cent of the population.

The Semester System Questionnaire was formulated from information gathered in related literature and included questions or modifications of questions found in related studies. A forty-item Likert scale dealt specifically with the characteristics of the semester system. The items dealt with: (1) advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school term, (2) advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period, (2) administrative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system, (4) how compatible the semester system is with existing values and past experiences, of principals, teachers and students, and (5) the communicability, or ease with which one person may inform another about the semester system.

One-way Analysis of Variance followed by the Scheffe Multiple

Comparison of Means test was used to test for significant differences between mean scores on each of the forty items.

Significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of principals on twenty-six of the forty items. An examination of the significant differences shows that the most consistent difference between mean scores occurred between the principals of conventional schools planning not to semester and the other three categories of principals. On those items dealing with the advantages of the semester system principals working in and perhaps committed to the semester system saw these items as significantly greater advantages than did principals of schools planning not to semester. On those items dealing with the disadvantages of the semester system principals of schools planning not to semester perceived these items as significantly greater disadvantages than did principals working in and perhaps committed to the semester system.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
The Problem.	2
Specific Statement of the Problem.	2
Importance of the Study.	3
Definition of Terms Used	4
Assumptions.	5
Limitations.	6
Delimitations.	6
Summary.	7
References for Chapter I	8
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	9
The Adoption Process	9
Factors Affecting Perception	13
Organization of the School Year.	15
The Conventional School.	15
The Divided School Year.	16
The Quarter System	18
The Trimester System	19
The Semester System.	20
Modified School Year	25
Summary and Statement of Hypotheses.	26
References for Chapter II.	31
III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.	33
The Variables.	33

CHAPTER	PAGE
The Sample	33
The Instrument	34
Collection of the Data	39
Treatment of the Data.	40
References for Chapter III	42
IV. DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE.	43
Summary of Returns	43
Personal and Professional Variables.	44
School Characteristics	61
Information Pertaining to Semestering.	65
Summary.	73
V. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA	79
Perception of the Characteristics of the Semester	
System	79
Hypothesis I	79
Hypothesis II.	85
Hypothesis III	91
Hypothesis IV.	97
Hypothesis V	99
Summary.	101
Additional Findings.	102
Summary.	106
VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.	108
Summary of the Study	108
Review of the Findings	111

CHAPTER	PAGE
Conclusions.	113
Implications	116
Recommendations for Further Study.	117
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	119
APPENDICES.	122
Appendix A: The Semester System Questionnaire.	124
Appendix B: Frequency and Percentage Responses of the Four Categories of Principals to the 40 item Likert Scale.	132
Appendix C: Further Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of the Semester System	147
Appendix D: The Frequency and Percentage of the Four Categories of Principals who Did or Did Not Consult Their Staff, Their Students and the Parents on the Advantages and Disadvantages of the Semester System	150

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. Summary of Returns from Principals in the Sample	45
II. Distribution of Respondents According to Present School Organization and Future Plans	46
III. Future Plans With Respect to School Year Organization of Conventional Schools Intending to Semester and Schools Presently Completely or Partially Semestered	47
IV. Distribution of Principals by Sex.	48
V. Distribution of Principals by Age.	50
VI. Distribution of Principals by the Number of Years of Education for Which They Are Paid	51
VII. Distribution of Principals by Recency of Education . . .	53
VIII. Distribution of Principals by Amount of Graduate Work Completed in Educational Administration	54
IV. Distribution of Principals According to Years of Experience in Present School	56
X. Distribution of Principals According to Total Years of Experience as Principal	57
XI. Distribution of Principals According to the Number of Schools with Which They Have Been Associated	58
XII. Distribution of Principals by Number of A.T.A. Specialist Councils to Which They Belong	60
XIII. Distribution of Principals by Number of Educational Organizations to Which They Belong	62
XIV. Distribution of Principals in the Sample by Number of Professional Journals Read.	63

TABLE

PAGE

XV.	Distribution of Principals According to the Grades Taught in the School	64
XVI.	Mean Number of Teachers, Students and Part-time Students by Type of School	66
XVII.	Percentage of Principals Having the Final Decision to Adopt or Reject the Semester System	67
XVIII.	Rankings According to Importance in Decision to Adopt or Reject the Semester System.	69
XIX.	Distribution of Principals According to the Number of Schools Observed Employing the Semester System. .	70
XX.	Distribution of Principals by the Number of Administrators with whom They Discussed the Semester System Prior to Adoption or Rejection . . .	72
XXI.	Ranking of Sources of Information According to Their Importance in the Decision to Adopt or Reject the Semester System.	74
XXII.	Distribution of the Schools by Year in which They Were Semestered.	75
XXIII.	Summary of the Means and Standard Deviations of the Four Categories of Principals on Selected Personal and Professional Variables	77
XXIV.	Mean Scores of the Four Categories of Principals on Perceived Advantages of the Shorter School Term. . .	80
XXV.	Mean Scores of the Four Categories of Principals on Perceived Disadvantages of the Shorter School Term	82

TABLE

PAGE

XXVI.	Mean Scores of the Four Categories of Principals on Perceived Advantages of the Longer Classroom Period	86
XXVII.	Mean Scores of the Four Categories of Principals on Perceived Disadvantages of the Longer Classroom Period	88
XXVIII.	Mean Scores of the Four Categories of Principals on Perceived Administrative Advantages of the Semester System.	92
XXIX.	Mean Scores of the Four Categories of Principals on Perceived Administrative Disadvantages of the Semester System.	94
XXX.	Mean Scores of the Four Categories of Principals on Perceived Compatibility of the Semester System . .	98
XXI.	Mean Scores of the Four Categories of Principals on Perceived Communicability of the Semester System .	100

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Everett M. Rogers states:

Because of further growth in institutional size, new institutional technology, shifting social expectations . . . , and students with different needs and capabilities, organizations must be developed to adapt with, rather than dam, the modern current (6:67).

Educators in the province of Alberta are attempting to adapt to this modern current. One method being employed is the reorganization of the school year. The transition is from the conventional school year to a divided school year. However, as the Alberta Teachers' Association ad hoc Committee on Reorganization of the School Year points out:

No system of divided school year, whether it be the traditional school year, the semester year or the quarter year will ever be the final solution to the ever changing problems that face us in our changing field of education. However, we do have serious needs now and foresee even greater problems in the future. We must not only act for these present needs but also for the predictable needs of the future (1:2).

The movement to meet these changing needs began when a system of three semesters was established, on an experimental basis, at the Red Deer Composite High School in September 1949 (3:55). Other types of reorganization occurred in subsequent years and as of September 1968, approximately 56 per cent of all secondary schools in the province of Alberta had adopted some form of reorganization of the school year. Prior to September 1966, approximately 1.5 per cent of secondary schools were employing a different approach to reorganization of the school year. This rapid surge in adoption of the divided school year may have been partly a result of a change in Department of Education regulations. During 1966, the high school regulations were changed so that any high

school could apply to change to a divided school year (2:2). A further reason for this rapid surge in adoption of the divided school year may be that principals sense advantages inherent in the divided school year which are not found in the conventional ten month school year.

I. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to determine whether there are differences between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals who are planning not to adopt the semester system, on their perception of the characteristics of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

Specific Statement of the Problem

What differences exists, if any, between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either a complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals who are planning not to adopt the semester system on their perception of:

1. The relative advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school term.
2. The relative advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period.
3. The administrative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system.
4. The compatibility of the semester system with the existing values and past experiences of principals, teachers and students.

5. The communicability of the semester system, or the ease with which one person may inform another about the semester system.

The study also sought answers to the following questions:

1. Are there differences on selected personal and professional characteristics between the four groups of principals, namely: (1) those whose schools are completely semestered, (2) those whose schools are partially semestered, (3) those planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) those planning not to adopt the semester system?

2. What sources of information influenced the decision to adopt or reject the semester system?

3. Do semester schools differ from conventional schools on selected school characteristics?

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The semester system is being adopted extensively in the province of Alberta despite the fact that there is little evidence, other than opinion, that this method of organizing the school is more advantageous than the conventional ten month school year. Hall cautions that:

In education, the product to be affected by a new procedure is the human one. Nothing is expendable here and time and effort lost are irretrievable. It is essential, therefore, the new methods, new devices, offered as means of improving the education process be thoroughly tested and carefully selected for their contribution to the fundamental goals of education. Mere gadgetry or novelty for its own sake can have no place in education (4:105).

With this thought in mind it is hoped that this study will offer an insight into the reasons why the semester system is being so readily adopted in the province of Alberta.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The following terms are thought to be basic to the study. The definitions of other terms will be given in the context in which they are used.

Semester system. This term is used to describe the type of instructional organization in which the school year is divided into two terms of approximately equal length. The first term begins approximately September 1 and continues until the latter part of January with the second term typically beginning in early February and continuing until the end of June. Final examinations are written at the end of each term.

Completely semestered school. A completely semestered school is one in which the substantial majority of courses for study are offered in one or the other or both terms with a final examination being written at the end of each term.

Partially semestered school. A partially semestered school is one in which some courses for study are offered over a ten month period with a final examination at the end of that ten month period, while other courses are offered in either a first or second term of approximately five months duration with a final examination at the end of each term.

Conventional school year. The conventional school year is one in which courses for study are offered over a ten month period. Instruction begins about September 1 and continues until the end of June. Final examinations are written only once a year typically near the end of June. This type of school year organization has been the predominant one in Alberta and thus is labelled the conventional school year in the

present study.

Conventional school. A conventional school is one in which courses for study are offered over a ten month period with final examinations typically written at the end of the ten month period.

Relative advantage. The term relative advantage refers to the degree to which an idea is superior to the idea it supersedes (5:124). For purposes of this study relative advantage will refer to the degree to which the semester system is felt to be superior to the conventional school year.

Compatibility. This term refers to the degree to which an idea is consistent with the existing values and past experiences of principals, teachers and students (5:126). For purposes of this study our concern shall be for the perceived compatibility of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

Communicability. The term communicability refers to the degree to which an idea may be diffused or passed on to others (3:132). For purposes of this study communicability refers to the ease by which one person may inform another about perceived advantages and disadvantages of the semester system.

IV. ASSUMPTIONS

Several assumptions underlie this study. These are:

1. Principals have considerable freedom to adopt or reject the semester system.
2. Principals in the study possessed accurate recall, perception and judgement.
3. It was assumed that class periods in semester schools were

longer than class periods in conventional schools as a full course of study is fitted into a single semester with the result that there would have to be an increase in class time per day or week to satisfy Department of Education regulations.

V. LIMITATIONS

The limitations of this study are:

1. The instrument used in the study is a questionnaire which may not produce an accurate measure of the respondent's feelings towards the semester system as compared with his feelings towards the conventional school year.
2. Principals were asked to respond to questions which teachers or students may have answered more accurately.
3. Perceptions of the advantages of the semester system may be affected by a "band wagon" effect, that is, the desire for schools to become semestered simply because other schools are doing so.
4. The theory underlying part of the study is the theory of the "adoption process". However, since the study deals with the adoption of only one innovation, the semester system, conclusions as to the characteristics of innovative and non-innovative principals would not be justified.

VI. DELIMITATIONS

The study was delimited to the following:

1. Principals of secondary public and separate schools in the province of Alberta; no respondents have been selected from private or post-secondary institutions.

2. Schools which contained all of grades, ten, eleven and twelve.

VII. SUMMARY

The semester system in Alberta is subject to Department of Education approval. Since 1966 when the high school regulations were changed enabling all high schools to apply for the adoption of the semester system, secondary schools in Alberta have been readily adopting this approach to instructional organization. This is occurring despite the lack of evidence that this method of organizing the school year is superior to the conventional school year. It is therefore felt that principals must perceive some advantages inherent in the semester system that are not found in the conventional school year. Thus the purpose of this study is to determine whether there are differences between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, on their perception of the advantages and disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In analyzing the problem under study literature in three areas, namely; the adoption process, factors affecting perception, and methods of organizing the school year was reviewed. Of these three, methods of organizing the school year is perhaps most relevant to the present study and will receive the major emphasis in this review.

I. THE ADOPTION PROCESS

Literature dealing with the adoption process was reviewed because it was felt that a relationship might exist between the adoption of the semester system and the factors which affect the adoption of any innovation and in particular, innovations in education.

The adoption process is defined by Rogers as, "the mental process through which an individual passes from first learning about an innovation to final adoption" (19:12). This adoption process consists of five stages: the awareness stage, the interest stage, the evaluation stage, the trial stage and finally the adoption stage (19:17-18), although it must be remembered that an innovation may also be rejected at any stage in the adoption process (20:88). Furthermore these stages do not function in isolation. There are various influences which affect the adoption process. Rogers identifies these as: (1) antecedents, (2) sources of information and (3) characteristics of the innovation. Of these three the latter two influences, sources of information and characteristics of the innovation are of concern to this study.

Sources of Information

Information sources are important stimuli to the individual in the adoption process. According to Rogers:

The individual becomes aware of the innovation mainly by impersonal and cosmopolite sources such as mass media. . . . Localite and personal information sources are more important at the evaluation stage (19:307).

Characteristics of the Innovation

Woods feels that innovations themselves have certain characteristics that may or may not be related to the readiness with which they are adopted (28:30). Rogers reiterates these thoughts:

It matters little whether or not an innovation has a high degree of advantage over the idea it is replacing. What does matter is whether the individual perceives the relative advantages of the innovation. Likewise, it is the potential adopter's perceptions of the compatibility, complexity, divisibility and communicability of innovations that affect its rate of adoption (19:124).

Barnett also identifies the importance of the characteristics of an innovation in relation to its adoption. "The reception given to a new idea is not so fortuitous and unpredictable as it sometimes appears to be. The characteristics of the idea itself are an important asset" (2:313). Barnett goes on to say that,

The sponsorship of a novelty (innovation) is only one component of the acceptance situation There are . . . those features which are inherent in the novelty itself as they are envisaged by the potential acceptor (2:329).

In essence Barnett is saying that although an innovation may be sponsored by an individual or a group of individuals acceptance of the innovation is not totally dependent upon this sponsorship. There are certain characteristics of the innovation itself that fosters either its acceptance or rejection. Rogers identified these as; relative advantage,

compatibility, complexity, divisibility and communicability. However, this study is not concerned with all five of the characteristics of an innovation but with the characteristics of relative advantage, compatibility and communicability. The characteristic complexity was omitted because of the difficulty in attempting to clearly distinguish between complexity and compatibility. The characteristic divisibility was discussed as a relative advantage.

Current Research on Selected Characteristics of Innovations

Relative advantage. Guy's study showed a significant correlation between the relative advantage of the Division II curriculum and the adoption of the program. Principals who adopted this curriculum perceived a high rate of relative advantage over the existing system (14:80). As Rogers states:

It matters little whether the innovation has a great deal of objective advantage What does matter is whether or not the individual perceives a relative advantage of the innovation (19:58).

However Barnett feels that just as the prospect of an advantage offered by a novelty (innovation) is conducive to its acceptance so is the lack of promise a deterrent (2:363).

Compatibility. Rogers and Carlson assume that innovators tend to adopt more quickly innovations which they perceive to have a high degree of compatibility (28:30). As Rogers states, "compatibility ensures greater security to the potential adopter and makes the new idea more meaningful" (19:127). For example, Rogers feels that resistance to programmed instruction was a fear by teachers and the public that programmed instruction would destroy the personal approach in teaching, that is; programmed instruction was seen as a destroyer of

the old way and therefore not compatible (20:69). Graham felt that the compatibility of T.V. and canasta with the values placed on these two types of recreation by the different social classes accounted for the difference in their adoption (13:8). In contradiction to these findings Guy found that on the basis of a significant negative correlation, "principals of schools tend to adopt more rapidly innovations which they perceive to have a low degree of compatibility" (14:83).

Communicability. The results of some ideas are easily observed and communicated to others, while some innovations are difficult to describe to others. The communicability of an innovation as perceived by members of a social system affects its rate of adoption. This seems true as Graham found that the amount of contact between the innovation and potential acceptors was crucial in determining the degree of acceptance (13:99).

Conclusion

There is no conclusive data available on the degree to which the characteristics of an innovation affect its diffusion (27:30). As Rogers states:

Further research will certainly be necessary before the five characteristics of an innovation . . . can be accepted as the five most important characteristics in affecting . . . adoption. At the present time the (five characteristics) . . . should properly be regarded as only potentially useful tools for the analysis . . . of new ideas (19:134).

Furthermore, as Hobbs points out, characteristics are not intrinsic qualities of an innovation, but rather are defined and evaluated in terms of social system values and beliefs. Thus an innovation perceived as having advantages by one system may not be seen as having the same advantages by another system (15:22).

Consequently, the question of an individual's perception would seem of prime importance in the acceptance or rejection of an innovation.

II. FACTORS AFFECTING PERCEPTION

Studies summarized by Bruner indicate that perceptual distortion is related to an individual's background, his interest, values and attitudes (8:23). Ittleson and Cantril reiterate this idea in that they feel an individual observes and acts from his own personal behavioral center. In such an approach, perceiving is seen as always being done by a person from his unique position in space, and time, and with his own values, needs and experiences (16:5). Furthermore Cantril suggests that perception depends on the assumptions that are brought to a particular occasion, for, as he says, "the significance we attach to objects, people, and events depends as much or more, on what we bring to the situation as on the situation itself" (8:24). Enns concurs with these thoughts in that, "perceptions are not simple accurate reproductions of objective reality. But rather, they are visually distorted, colored, incomplete and highly subjective versions of reality" (8:23).

A few factors which do distort our perception are: (1) characteristics of the perceiver, (2) situational influences, (3) selectivity, and (4) the halo effect.

Characteristics of the Perceiver

As Cantril has suggested a person's perception is dependent to a large extent on the assumptions that are brought to a particular occasion. Thus meanings that we may assign to innovations may well be meanings we have built up through past experiences. Meanings that are

not inherent in the innovation but in the perceiver of that innovation. Furthermore, as Brown points out, man in order to make sense out of his environment develops unique characteristics of his own. He constructs his own individual ways of observing his social world so that it makes meaning to him: he constructs his own perceptual system (3:36).

Situational Influences

The organization, one's place in it, and the concern one feels about both, influence his perceptions, or, in other words, a person's perception relates directly to his position and responsibilities (8:25). Consequently as Cantril points out, "an individual will always interpret an interaction between himself and the organization in terms of his background, his culture, his experiences and his expectations" (6:48). However, Costello and Zalkind mention that:

. . . to the extent that two persons' positions overlap, including not only their orientation in time and space but also their interests and purposes, they will tend to have common perceptions and common experiences (8:4).

Selectivity

The process of selectivity is forced upon us due to the fact that in the process of knowing, of which perceiving is one aspect, organisms have a highly limited span of immediate memory (4:86). Secord and Backman agree with Bruner in that the perceiver must reduce the overload of information to a manageable size. Thus the perceiver exhibits an economizing effect (26:84). This form of mental categorization is learned, according to Bruner, "on the basis of experience, by virtue of our membership in a culture and a linguistic community, and by the nature of the needs we must fulfill" (5:12).

Halo Effect

The halo effect has been described by Costello and Zalkind as a "systematic error" that creeps into the process of perception (7:5). Cantril further describes the halo effect as a process in which a general impression that is favorable or unfavorable is used by judges to evaluate. The halo in such cases serves to act as a screen, keeping the judge from actually seeing what he is judging. The result may be that a person may single out a characteristic--good or bad--and use this as the basis for his judgement of all other characteristics (6:26).

Conclusion

This section has dealt with factors which affect our perception. The importance of accurate perception is clear. Understanding perception aids individuals to accept various occurrences more objectively, while assessing needs and demands more adequately. The individual must avoid making arbitrary and categorical judgements and to seek more reliable evidence before judgements are passed. In education this is of prime importance particularly when concerned with the adoption or rejection of an innovation.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

The Conventional School Year

The majority of Canadian schools operate a school year commencing in September and ending in June. The programs of study are adapted to this ten month school year with a final examination being administered in June (11:15). However this has not always been the case. Philips reports that one of the major concerns of central authorities in the

mid 18th century was to lengthen the school year to ten months or more. Prior to this time public schools operated with a winter or summer term of six months. The proposed longer school year introduced the question of vacation periods which would extend from three weeks to six weeks. However these attitudes towards the vacation period changed around the turn of the century probably due to the effect of three factors-- prosperity, consideration for the child, and the establishment of summer schools for the professional improvement of teachers. From then on, it became established practise for schools to be closed in July and August, for a week or so at Christmas and Easter, on Saturdays and Statutory holidays (17:242-243).

Recent Royal Commissions on education in Canada have not been consistent in their views concerning the length of the school year. The Ontario Royal Commission recommended that the present statutory requirements in regard to school terms be continued and specified in the proposed Education Act (21:174). On the other hand a lengthening of the school year was favored by the Yukon (24:4) and Quebec (25:331) Royal Commissions on education. The Manitoba Royal Commission recommended a shortening of the school year to 195 days from the present 200 and further recommended that the school year be divided into three regular periods which would eliminate the difficulties caused by the variability of Easter (22:226). The Alberta Royal Commission on education also recommended the divided school year (23:390).

The Divided School Year

The Alberta Royal Commission saw certain advantages in a divided school year, such as; facilitating the return to school of drop-outs,

facilitating the make up of credit deficiencies, and facilitating a more complete use of the teaching plant thereby reducing the capital cost ratio per pupil. Furthermore the commission felt that the divided school year might take two forms: (1) three quarters of three months each, or (2) two semesters of approximately four and one-half months. In either case a summer session could be an addition. However the commission did caution that the introduction of the system should proceed only after careful examination of all known and foreseeable factors in a given situation. With the above reservation the committee believed that:

The introduction of the divided academic year in high schools would offer a number of advantages which would far outweigh any disadvantage or inconvenience which may be inherent in the system (23:390-392).

Girard felt that the interest of the Alberta Royal Commission in the divided school year, "may have been due, in part, to the actual operation of the Red Deer School and, in part, to the brief submitted to the commission relating to semester and trimester systems of school year operation" (11:17). Girard reviews the briefs presented to the commission. In short these briefs dealt with the advantages of a divided school year. The River Glen Home and School Association of Red Deer claimed a higher percentage of passes in academic subjects. The Fairview Chamber of Commerce felt the student would benefit from taking fewer courses and would be able to repeat a course in the second semester that he had failed in the first semester. The Alberta Teachers' Association maintained that students were encouraged by the advantage of short-term instruction to return to school; drop-outs were fewer and more economical use could be made of the school plant (11:17-19).

The briefs cited were concerned with the advantages of a divided

school year and as Girard and Enns point out:

One of the concerns of a school system is to improve the effectiveness of learning and at the same time, to maintain or increase the efficiency of resources to achieve such improvement A further innovation which might contribute to the more effective utilization of resources is the divided school year (12:1).

Secondary schools in the province of Alberta are adopting a divided school year. At present there are three different types of divided school year in operation in Alberta, with a fourth being proposed. A majority of secondary schools have adopted the semester system, two schools are operating on the trimester system with one school operating under a modified school year. The fourth type of school year organization being proposed by the Alberta Teachers' Association is the quarter system.

The Quarter System

The Alberta Teachers' Association ad hoc Committee on Reorganization of the School Year (1:1-2) presented a position paper to the members of the Teachers' Association in January of 1969. They proposed the adoption, in principle, of a school year based on a quarter system with exit and entry points at Christmas and the end of June. The proposed quarter system would provide: (1) three quarters of at least sixty student days each quarter, and (2) a summer quarter with fifty-eight student days which would be utilized initially on a local option basis. A full school year would be comprised of three full quarters. Furthermore the Committee foresees the proposed quarter system as having certain advantages for the student.

1. Release of student for work or further education will not occur at any one time of the year.

2. A student requiring remedial work or desiring enrichment will find the "extra quarter" most suitable. Failing, as such will be eliminated.
3. Students moving . . . can be better accommodated with more entry and exit points
4. A student will find it possible to "accelerate or decelerate his program" if it is desirable.
5. Shorter school terms for courses will tend to discourage school drop-outs.
6. There will be a minimum loss of time for prolonged illness.
7. Provides for more than one entry period in the year
8. Enables a student to complete a course or two required for completion of the secondary school program.
9. Greater use of specialist teachers in areas of short supply

Since the Alberta Teachers' Association proposal for a quarter system was not presented until January 1969, no school in the province is operating under this method of school year organization, although there are two schools in the province operating under a three semester or trimester method of reorganized school year.

The Trimester System

The trimester method of reorganization of the school year has been described by Girard as a school year divided into three equal terms, such that:

The terms were approximately equal in length, the first extending from September until early December, the second from December until March and the third from March until June. Instruction in any given course was completed during the term and the students were examined at the end of each term (11:1).

The main reasons for establishing the trimester system are reported by Girard (11:2):

1. Making possible attendance of rural youngsters during the winter term.

2. Making it possible for students to complete their high school program without a full year's attendance.
3. Testing the hypothesis that immediate goals are more effective than deferred goals.
4. Facilitating the scheduling of academic and shop courses in the same school.

Furthermore Girard classified the problems associated with the operation of the trimester school into two broad groups: (1) those associated with mechanical organization, and (2) those associated with learning effectiveness (11:5). His study of the trimester system focused on the question of learning effectiveness, in that he:

. . . investigated student achievement in Red Deer students on Grade XII departmental examinations in English, Social Studies and Mathematics for the years 1955, 1958 and 1961 was compared with the achievement of students who attended conventionally organized schools and who wrote the same examinations in the same years (11:28).

An analysis of the data gathered indicated that none of the differences in achievement between the Red Deer students and the control students was statistically significant, although the achievement of Red Deer students was at least as good as that of students in conventionally organized schools (11:31).

Although the trimester system has not been proven to be ineffective with regard to academic achievement the trend in Alberta has been to adopt a two term or semester system.

The Semester System

The semester system has been described by Fehlberg as being a method of reorganizing the school year such that the semester system:

. . . divides the conventional school term into two shorter terms, each of approximately one hundred days duration The length of subject instruction time per day is adjusted (doubled) and the total number of units of subject matter to be covered during the conventional term is presented during one term (9:6).

History and development. The history and development of the semester system has been described by Fehlberg. He points out that the first school to employ a divided school year was Red Deer Composite High School which adopted the trimester system in 1949. During the year 1953-54 three schools were operating under a short term scheduling arrangement. Added to Red Deer Composite were two other schools, Mount Royal College, Calgary, and Alberta College, Edmonton. By 1960 seven schools or institutions were using a divided school year. To the original three were added, Cardston High School, Fairview School of Agriculture, the Correspondence School and the Yellowknife High School which followed the Alberta curriculum and wrote Alberta Departmental Examinations. Of these schools, Red Deer was the only school on a trimester program. The other had adopted a semestered program. In 1966, the high school regulations were changed, enabling all high schools to apply for the adoption of the semester system. By the end of 1966, thirty-two schools had adopted the semester system and by September 1967, the number of semestered schools had mushroomed to ninety-four (9:9-10). In September of 1968 there were 178 schools in the province of Alberta operating on a divided school year. Of these 178 schools Camille J. Lerouge and Lindsay Thurber Collegiate in Red Deer were on a trimester system while the Winston Churchill High School, Lethbridge was experimenting with a modified school year. The modified school year is divided at Christmas with the first term beginning on or around August 1 and the second term being completed at the end of May (18:5-6). The remainder of the schools, 175, were operating under the semester system.

Research on the semester system. The most thorough research

dealing with the semester system in Alberta has been completed by Fehlberg. His concern, as was Girard's, was with the effects of the semester system on student achievement. Fehlberg's concern stemmed from the fact that schools contemplating the establishment of the semester system appear to be stimulated mainly by the administrative properties of the system for as he says, "the effects of the semester system on student achievement seems of little immediate or objective interest to the administrators" (9:22). Fehlberg stresses this point as he goes on to say that:

. . . any type of school year organization, no matter how attractive its administrative properties may be, should be rejected if student achievement is adversely affected by this type of organization (9:23).

As a result of this seeming lack of concern by administrators of the semester system on student achievement Fehlberg instituted a study which sought to investigate:

. . . the relationship between the Alberta semester system of school term organization and student achievement. More specifically student achievement in English 30, Social Studies 30 and Mathematics 30 under the compacted type of instruction in 1966-67 was compared to achievement under the long term (conventional) type of instruction during the same period (9:49).

The results of Fehlberg's analysis of the data did not support his hypothesis that students enrolled under the semester system of school term organization would obtain lower achievement scores than students enrolled under the conventional type of school term organization. Indeed, in one subject, Social Studies 30, it appeared that student achievement was superior under the semester system (9:49).

In concluding his study Fehlberg felt that no evidence was found to reject the semester system while, on the other hand, little evidence was produced which could support the introduction of a full semester

system into a given organization (9:50).

A similar study was conducted by Forsheit in the United States. His thesis was that pupils would achieve significantly larger proportions of passing marks under annual organization than under semi-annual organization of the school year. He concluded that in the subjects investigated pupil achievement was higher under annual organization than under semi-annual organization. He further generalized that subjects like English, French and Social Studies lead to better achievement under annual organization while subjects like Mathematics may lead to better achievement under semi-annual organization (10:277).

Although both studies reported above dealt only with student achievement, unpublished reports and letters that concern themselves with other aspects of the semester system were also reviewed. The advantages and disadvantages of the semester system that were presented in these documents are summarized below under the headings. The main documents consulted were:

1. 'Report of the Semester Study Committee of the Edmonton Public School Board,"1967.
2. "Semester System Observations," Calgary, November, 1967 by Mr. A. E. Henderson, Principal, Ross Sheppard Composite High School, Edmonton.
3. "A Synopsis of Semestering";A Paper Presented to the Composite High School Principals' Conference, Medicine Hat, 1968.
4. A Report of the External High School Evaluation Team on the Kate Andrews High School at Coaldale, Alberta of the County of Lethbridge No. 26, Lethbridge, Alberta, following an evaluation conducted December 5, 6 and 7, 1967.
5. Bonnyville School Division No. 46--Semester Systems, February, 1968.
6. The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations Committee on Semestering and the Modified School Year, 1968.

7. Position Paper and Recommendation on Reorganization of the School Year and Semester Timetabling, by James L. George, Principal, W. R. Meyers School, Taber, Alberta.

A majority of these reported advantages and disadvantages of the semester system have also been cited by Fehlberg (9:12-15).

Advantages pertaining to factors affecting student achievement.

1. The more intensive type of instruction usually results in better achievement on the part of the pupils.
2. The immediacy of the goals is conducive to the formation of good work habits and increased motivation.
3. The longer class periods permit a subject to be studied in greater depth.
4. The longer class periods make for more efficient use of class time in subjects such as art, chemistry, and vocational courses.

Disadvantages pertaining to factors affecting student achievement.

1. Presenting a student with a full course during a semester leads to superficiality in learning.
2. The first semester student forgets more course-work before entering university.

Advantages pertaining to student scheduling, instruction and plant use.

1. The longer class period in all subjects fits in easily with the necessarily longer periods required for vocational electives.
2. It permits the student who may be deficient in credits to complete his high school program without taking a full year.
3. It permits adult students who require only one or two courses to complete them without taking a full year.
4. It gives the student the opportunity to repeat a course within the same academic year.
5. It enables the student to shift from one program to another during the year.
6. It results in the further use of buildings and facilities.

Disadvantages pertaining to student movement, evaluation and the school administration.

1. Students who are required to transfer to different schools during the first or second semester find difficulty in being accommodated into other semester or conventional school year programs.
2. An additional burden is placed on the school administration by being required to hold two registrations and examinations per year.
3. Student and teacher absenteeism places a heavy strain on the student.

A few of the commonly cited advantages have also been reported as advantages of the modified school year.

Modified School Year

At present one school, the Winston Churchill High School in Lethbridge is operating on a modified school year. The modified school year may be described as being the conventional school year divided into two approximately equal parts, as is the present semester system, with the following notable exception. The school year is divided at Christmas rather than the end of January with the first term beginning on or around August 1 and the second term being completed at the end of May (18:5-6).

Three different proposals have been presented concerning the modified school year, namely; (1) the Alberta Teachers' Association, (2) the Edmonton Public School Board Administration, and (3) the Alberta School Trustees' Association. The advantages as seen by the Alberta School Trustees' Association (18:8) are:

- (1) Two exit/entry points for students so that more flexible student programs may be arranged.
- (2) Better use of facilities.

(3) More satisfactory placement of teachers.

Conclusion

The school year in the province of Alberta is in transition. The movement is away from the conventional ten month school year to the adoption of a divided school year based on either the trimester system, the semester system or the modified school year.

Various organizations and individuals have presented position papers with regard to the advantages and disadvantages of the various methods of reorganizing the school year. Two studies, Girard on the trimester system and Fehlberg on the semester system, have shown that there is little difference in student achievement between students under the divided school year and students under the conventional school year. The question we might then ask ourselves is -- "Why are principals so rapidly adopting the semester system?"

IV. SUMMARY AND STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

As stated by Rogers, one of the factors affecting the adoption or rejection of an innovation are the characteristics of that innovation. However these characteristics of an innovation are perceived characteristics. Furthermore a review of the literature on perception has shown that there are various factors, such as; characteristics of the perceiver, situational influences, selectivity and the halo effect which would seem to affect our perception of individuals, objects, and more specific to this study, the semester system as compared to the conventional school year.

Therefore as a result of this review of the literature, and more

particularly the literature on perception, it would be expected that:

(1) principals in the province of Alberta whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, would perceive the relative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system differently.

It was with this thought in mind that the following research hypotheses and their alternatives were formulated.

Hypothesis 1

There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school term as compared with the conventional school year.

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school terms as compared with the conventional school year.

Hypothesis 2

There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period found in the semester system as compared with the shorter class period found in schools on the conventional school year.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period found in the semester system as compared with the shorter classroom period found in schools on the conventional school year.

Hypothesis 3

There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the administrative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

Null Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the administrative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

Hypothesis 4

There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the compatibility of the semester system with the existing values and past experiences of principals, teachers and students.

Null Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the compatibility of the semester system with the existing values and past experiences of principals, teachers and students.

Hypothesis 5

There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose

schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the communicability of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

Null Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the communicability of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

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CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I. THE VARIABLES

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in the present study are the 40 items describing the characteristics of the semester system. These items are found in Part III of the questionnaire (Appendix A).

Independent Variables

The independent variables for this study are: (1) the four groups of principals, namely: principals whose schools are completely semestered, principals whose schools are partially semestered, principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system and principals planning not to adopt the semester system, and (2) the personal and professional characteristics of the principals, and (3) the school characteristics.

II. THE SAMPLE

The criteria used in selecting principals to the sample was that:

1. The sample was limited to principals of secondary public and secondary separate schools in the province of Alberta; no respondents from private or post-secondary institutions were selected.
2. A further limitation imposed was that the principals selected were from schools which contained all of grades ten, eleven and twelve. Principals of schools which did not meet this requirement were omitted from the study.

III. THE INSTRUMENT

The instrument used in this study is referred to as the Semester System Questionnaire.

Development

The Semester System Questionnaire was formulated from information gathered in the related literature and included questions or modifications of questions found in related studies. The questionnaire contained four parts.

These are:

Part I: Personal background information

Part II: School characteristics

Part III: Principal's perception of semester system characteristics.

Part IV: Information pertaining to semestering.

Section I: To be answered by principals whose schools are presently non-semestered and who do not plan on either partially or fully semestering in the fall of 1969.

Section II: To be answered by principals whose schools are presently non-semestered but will become either partially or fully semestered in the fall of 1969.

Section III: To be answered by principals whose schools are presently either partially or fully semestered.

Personal Background Information

The personal background information section consisted of thirteen items (Appendix A). The purpose of this section of the questionnaire was to secure data regarding the characteristics of the sample

population. This section solicited the following information:

1. Sex.
2. Age.
3. The number of years of teacher education being paid for.
4. The highest degree held.
5. Recency of education.
6. Amount of graduate work completed.
7. Years of experience as principal in present school.
8. Total years of experience as principal.
9. If on staff prior to appointment as principal.
10. Number of different schools served in since starting to teach.
11. The number of A.T.A. Specialist Councils to which the respondent belongs.
12. The number of educational organizations to which the respondent belongs.
13. The number of professional (education) journals the respondent regularly reads.

School Characteristics

The school characteristics section consisted of ten items (Appendix A). The purpose of this section of the questionnaire was to secure data regarding: (1) the characteristics of the school of which the respondent is principal, (2) the present type of school year organization and proposed changes, if any, and (3) whether the principal had the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system and if the principal did not, who, in the principal's estimation, was influential in the decision to adopt or reject the semester system. The ten items more specifically stated are:

1. Grades included in the school.
2. The number of full-time high school teachers.
3. The number of full-time high school students.
4. The number of part-time high school students.
5. Present organization of the school year.
6. If completely semestered, the plans for 1969.
7. If partially semestered, the plans for 1969.
8. If non-semestered, the plans for 1969.
9. Whether the principal had the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system.
10. Who were thought to be influential in the decision to adopt or reject the semester system.

The responses to item number five were used as the criteria for dividing the principals into three groups: completely semestered, partially semestered or non-semestered. The responses to item number eight were used as the criteria for dividing the non-semestered principals into two groups: (1) principals who are planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (2) principals who are planning not to semester.

Principal's Perception of Semester System Characteristics

This section of the questionnaire consisted of forty-one items (Appendix A).

Items one to forty deal with characteristics of the semester system while the forty-first item was inserted to allow principals the opportunity to state what they feel may be further advantages or disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

The purpose of this section was to secure data regarding the principal's perceptions of the characteristics of the semester system. A review of the literature led to the formulation of the forty items. These forty items were then grouped into five areas to facilitate meaningful discussion. The five areas and the numbers of the items pertaining to each area are listed below.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Shorter School Term

Advantages. Of the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system, eight of these items dealt with advantages of the shorter school term. These items are numbers 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Disadvantages. Of the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system, four of these items dealt with disadvantages of the shorter school term. These items are numbered as follows: 3, 5, 6 and 24.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Longer Classroom Period

Advantages. Of the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system, eight of these items dealt with the advantages of the longer classroom period. These items are numbered as follows: 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21 and 32.

Disadvantages. Of the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system, three of these items dealt with disadvantages of the longer classroom period. These items are numbered as follows: 13, 18 and 19.

Administrative Advantages and Disadvantages of the Semester System

Advantages. Of the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system, four of these items dealt with administrative advantages. These items are numbered as follows: 11, 26, 28 and 31.

Disadvantages. Of the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system, six of these items dealt with administrative disadvantages. These items are numbered as follows: 22, 23, 25, 27, 29 and 35.

Compatibility of the Semester System

Of the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system, three of these items dealt with the compatibility of the semester system with the existing values and past experiences of the principals, teachers and students. These items are numbered as follows: 30, 33 and 34.

Communicability of the Semester System

Of the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system, five of these items dealt with the communicability of the semester system, or the ease by which one person may inform another about the semester system. These items are numbered as follows: 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40.

Information Pertaining to Semestering

This portion of the questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section was answered by principals who are planning not to adopt the semester system, the second section was answered by principals who are planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester

system while section three was answered by principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered. Section one contained fifteen items, section two contained fourteen items while section three contained sixteen items. The purpose of these three sections was to secure data with regard to:

1. The number of schools visited to observe the semester system in operation prior to the decision to adopt or reject the semester system.
2. The number of administrators with whom the semester system was discussed prior to the decision to adopt or reject the semester system.
3. Which sources of information were relied on most heavily in deciding to adopt or reject the semester system.
4. Whether the staff, students or parents were consulted prior to the decision to adopt or reject the semester system.
5. The positions of the persons who were most influential in the decision to adopt or reject the semester system.
6. Further comments concerning the semester system.

Furthermore principals responding to section one were asked if they had ever considered adopting the semester system while principals responding to section three were asked to state the year that their school was either completely or partially semestered and whether or not they were principal in the school one year prior to the adoption of the semester system.

IV. COLLECTION OF THE DATA

The Semester System Questionnaire was mailed to all principals of secondary public and separate schools whose schools contained all of grades ten, eleven and twelve. A letter accompanied each questionnaire explaining the purpose of the study and soliciting the principal's

assistance. A stamped, self-addressed envelope was included with the questionnaire. A total of 246 questionnaires were mailed.

Two weeks following the mailing of the initial questionnaire a follow-up letter was sent to those principals who had not returned the questionnaire. After a further two weeks a second follow-up letter was mailed which included a second copy of the questionnaire.

It was hoped that this method of data collection would encourage a maximum number of replies.

V. TREATMENT OF THE DATA

Scoring

Principals responding to the forty items dealing with the characteristics of the semester system were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each item. Each item was followed by a five point Likert scale, such that if the respondent circled (AS) he agreed strongly, if (A) he agreed, if (U) he was undecided, if (D) he disagreed and if (DS) he disagreed strongly with the statement. Those items designated as advantages, that is; advantages of the shorter school term, advantages of the longer class period and administrative advantages were positively scored as follows:

AS	A	U	D	DS
5	4	3	2	1

The remaining items were negatively scored as follows:

AS	A	U	D	DS
1	2	3	4	5

Statistical Treatment

To facilitate making comparison between the four groups of

principals a One-Way Analysis of Variance was used to test for significant differences between the means of each of the four groups of principals on each of the forty items (1:281-283). However one of the basic assumptions in the application of the analysis of variance is that the variances in the population from which the samples are drawn are equal, that is, to test for homogeneity of variance. Where gross departures from homogeneity occurred a nonparametric test, the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks was used (1:294).

The F-test determines if there is a significant difference between the means of the four groups. To determine between which pairs of means there was a significant difference, the Scheffe Multiple Comparison of Means test was employed (1:296-297). The Scheffe Test was chosen because there were unequal n's between the four groups and the Scheffe method allows for this discrepancy (1:297).

The level of significance adopted for the parametric tests was $p \leq .05$, whereas the level of significance adopted for the non-parametric test was $p \leq .01$ (1:164).

The remaining data on the questionnaire were used only to describe the sample and to determine whether there were similarities or differences between sub-samples. Parametric tests were used for discrete variables in testing for these similarities or differences.

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CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

This chapter presents data which describe the four categories of principals which comprise the sample, namely; (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals who are planning not to adopt the semester system. Comparisons were made among the four groups in order to determine the following: (1) whether there was a significant difference between the four categories of principals on certain selected personal and professional characteristics, (2) whether there were significant differences between the four categories of principals on the type of school they were in, and (3) whether or not there was a significant difference between the four categories of principals on the number of schools they observed employing the semester system and the number of administrators they discussed the semester system with prior to the decision to adopt or reject the semester system in their schools.

I. SUMMARY OF RETURNS

This study was confined to principals of public and separate secondary schools in the province of Alberta whose schools contained all of grades ten, eleven and twelve; no respondents were to be selected from principals of private or post-secondary institutions.

With this criteria in mind and with reference to a List of Operating Schools in Alberta, published by the Alberta Department of

Education in December of 1968, 246 principals were selected for the sample. Questionnaires were mailed to each of the principals and 218 or 88.6 per cent returned the questionnaire. Of the 218 questionnaires returned, 4 were incomplete and classified as not usable. The 214 usable questionnaires were 87 per cent of those mailed out. Table I summarizes these returns.

An examination of Table II shows that of the 214 principals in the final sample 30 or 14 per cent were principals of conventional schools planning not to semester, 28 or 13.1 per cent were principals of conventional schools planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system in 1969, 77 or 36 per cent were principals whose schools are completely semestered while 79 or 36.9 per cent were principals whose schools are partially semestered.

Furthermore, of the 28 principals of conventional schools planning to semester 60.7 per cent are planning to adopt a partial semester system while 35.7 per cent are planning to adopt a complete semester system. The principal of one completely semestered school is planning to revert to a partial semester system while 23 or 16.5 per cent of the principals whose schools are partially semestered are planning to adopt a complete semester system. Table III summarizes the plans these principals have for their schools.

II. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL VARIABLES

Personal Variables

Sex. As might be expected 208 or 98.6 per cent of the principals were male while only 3 or 1.4 per cent were female. Table IV gives a summary of the distribution of the principals in the sample by sex.

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF RETURNS FROM PRINCIPALS IN THE SAMPLE

	Number	Percentage
Usable Questionnaires (Final Sample)	214	87.0
Questionnaires not Returned	28	11.4
Questionnaires not Usable	4	1.6
Total Questionnaires Sent out	246	100.0

TABLE II
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO PRESENT
SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND FUTURE PLANS

(N = 214)

	Number	Percentage
Conventional School Not Planning to Semester	30	14.0
Conventional School Intending to Semester	28	13.1
Completely Semestered School	77	36.0
Partially Semestered School	79	36.9
Total Number of Respondents	214	100.0

TABLE III

FUTURE PLANS WITH RESPECT TO SCHOOL YEAR ORGANIZATION
OF CONVENTIONAL SCHOOLS INTENDING TO SEMESTER AND
SCHOOLS PRESENTLY COMPLETELY OR PARTIALLY SEMESTERED

(N = 184)

Future Plans	Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Retaining the present system	0		61	77.2	75	97.4	136	73.9
Adopting a partial semester (or revering to a partial semester)	17	60.7	0		1	1.3	18	9.9
Adopting a complete semester system	10	35.7	13	16.5	0		23	12.5
Undecided	1	3.6	5	6.3	1	1.3	7	3.8
Total	28		79		77		184	100.1

TABLE IV
DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY SEX
(N = 211)

Sex	Number	Percentage
Male	208	98.6
Female	3	1.4
Total	211	100.0

Age. Table V gives the distribution of the principals in the sample by age. This table shows the principals' ages in eight categories ranging from 25 years of age to 60 years and over. The mean age of the principals of conventional schools planning not to semester was 47.2 years. The mean age of the principals of conventional schools planning to semester was 47.4 years. The mean age of the principals whose schools are completely semestered was 45.3 years and the mean age of the principals whose schools are partially semestered was 46.4 years. Although the mean ages of principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered was lower than the other two categories of principals, analysis of variance revealed that there were no significant differences between the four categories of principals.

Professional Variables

Years of education. An examination of Table VI which summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals in the sample by the number of years of education for which they are being paid shows that the number of years for which principals of conventional schools planning not to semester are being paid is 5 years. Principals of conventional schools planning to semester are being paid for an average of 4.68 years while principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered are being paid for an average of 4.86 years. An analysis of variance test revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean years for which the four categories of principals are being paid. However, it is interesting to note that 40 per cent of the principals of conventional schools planning not to semester are being paid for 6 years or more of education.

TABLE V
DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY AGE

(N = 211)

Age	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
Range in Years	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
25 - 29.5	2	6.9	2	7.1	7	9.0	9	11.8	20	9.5
30 - 34.5	6	20.7	5	17.9	12	15.4	10	13.2	33	15.6
35 - 39.5	1	3.4	1	3.6	8	10.3	10	13.2	20	9.5
40 - 44.5	3	10.3	6	21.4	15	19.2	11	14.5	35	16.6
45 - 49.5	3	10.3	4	14.3	9	11.5	13	17.1	29	13.7
50 - 54.5	7	24.1	5	17.9	8	10.3	11	14.5	31	14.7
55 - 59.5	5	17.2	1	3.6	13	16.7	9	11.8	28	13.3
60 years and over	2	6.9	4	14.3	6	7.7	3	3.9	15	7.1
Total	29		28		78		76		211	100.0
Mean Age*		47.2		47.4		46.4		45.3		
S.D.		2.40		2.17		2.22		2.12		

*F ratio: .37; not significant

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY NUMBER OF YEARS
OF EDUCATION FOR WHICH THEY ARE PAID
(N = 212)

Years of Education for Which Paid	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
Range in Years	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
3 - 3.5	1	3.3	2	7.1	2	2.6	3	3.9	8	3.8
4 - 4.5	10	33.3	11	39.3	26	33.3	25	32.9	72	34.0
5 - 5.5	7	23.3	9	32.1	26	33.3	23	30.3	6	30.7
6 years or more	12	40.0	6	21.4	24	30.8	25	32.9	67	31.6
Total	30		28		78		76		212	
Mean years paid for*		5.0		4.68		4.86		4.86		
S.D.		.95		.90		1.02		1.06		

*F ratio: .49; not significant

Recency of education. Table VII summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals in the sample according to recency of formal education. In all four categories the frequencies were positively skewed. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had taken formal education on an average of 2.47 years ago. Principals of conventional schools planning to semester had taken formal education on the average of 2.21 years ago while principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered had taken formal education on an average of 2.42 and 2.41 years ago, respectively. An analysis of variance test comparing these means showed no significant difference between them. In the case of principals of conventional schools planning not to semester 50 per cent of the principals had taken formal education within the last four years while 50 per cent had not. In the other three categories of principals 60 per cent or more had taken formal education within the last four years.

Graduate work completed in Educational Administration. An examination of Table VIII indicates that 48.8 per cent of all the principals have not taken any graduate courses in Educational Administration and only 10.4 per cent hold a graduate degree in Educational Administration. It might be noted that 16.7 per cent of the principals of conventional schools planning not to semester do hold a graduate degree in Educational Administration while only 10.7 per cent or less of the other three categories of principals hold such a degree.

Years of experience as principal in present school. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester have been in their schools for an average of 5.73 years, principals of conventional schools planning to semester have been in their schools for an average of 4.71

TABLE VII

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY REGENCY OF EDUCATION

(N = 212)

Recency of Education	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Range in Years										
0 - 0.9	10	33.3	10	35.7	20	25.6	21	27.6	61	28.8
1 - 3.9	5	16.7	9	32.1	28	35.9	26	34.2	68	32.1
4 - 6.9	9	30.0	4	14.3	15	19.2	10	13.2	38	17.9
7 - 9.9	3	10.0	3	10.7	6	7.7	12	15.8	24	11.3
10 or more years ago	3	10.0	2	7.1	9	11.5	7	9.2	21	9.9
Total	30		28		78		76		212	100.0
Mean*		2.47		2.21		2.41		2.42		
S.D.		1.33		1.26		1.29		1.32		

*F ratio: .22; not significant

TABLE VIII

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY AMOUNT OF GRADUATE WORK
COMPLETED IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

(N - 211)

Graduate Work Completed in Educational Administration	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No Graduate courses in Educational Administration	15	50.0	15	53.6	38	48.7	35	46.7	103	48.8
Some Graduate courses in Educational Administration	10	33.3	10	35.7	34	43.6	32	42.7	86	40.8
Hold a Graduate Degree in Educational Administration	5	16.7	3	10.7	6	7.7	8	10.7	22	10.4
Total	30		28		78		75		211	
Mean		1.67		1.57		1.57		1.60		
S.D.		.76		.69		.65		.71		

years while principals whose schools are completely semestered have been principals of their present schools for an average of 5.53 years.

Principals whose schools are partially semestered have been principals of their schools for an average of 7.48 years. An analysis of variance test comparing the four groups of principals revealed no significant difference between them on the mean number of years of experience as principal in their present schools. A further examination of Table IX which summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals according to the years of experience they have had in their present schools shows that 52.6 per cent of all the principals have been principal of their schools for three years or fewer.

Total years of experience as principal. Table X summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals according to their total number of years of experience as principal. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester have been principals for an average of 10.93 years. Principals of conventional schools planning to semester have been principals for an average 8.96 years. Principals whose schools are completely semestered have been principals for an average of 9.60 years while principals whose schools are partially semestered have had an average of 10.76 years of experience as principal. An analysis of variance test comparing these means revealed no significant difference between the four categories of principals and their total mean years of experience as principals.

Number of schools associated with. Table XI summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals according to the number of schools with which they have been associated either as teachers, vice-principals, principals, etc. Principals of conventional

TABLE IX

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS ACCORDING TO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS
PRINCIPAL IN PRESENT SCHOOL

(N = 211)

Years of Experience	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
3 years or less	14	48.3	20	71.4	41	52.7	36	47.4	111	52.6
4 - 6 years	5	17.2	2	7.1	10	12.8	16	21.1	33	15.6
7 - 9 years	3	10.3	2	7.1	7	9.0	13	17.1	25	11.8
10 - 12 years	2	6.9	0		6	7.7	3	3.9	11	5.2
13 - 15 years	3	10.3	2	7.1	6	7.7	3	3.9	14	6.6
16 - 18 years	1	3.4	1	3.6	3	3.8	0		5	2.4
19 - 21 years	1	3.4	0		0		4	5.3	5	2.4
22 years or more	0		1	3.6	5	6.4	1	1.3	7	3.3
Total	29		28		78		76		211	99.9
Mean*	5.73		4.71		7.48		5.53			
S.D.	5.39		6.12		11.47		5.61			

*F ratio: 1.12; not significant

TABLE X
DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS ACCORDING TO TOTAL YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS PRINCIPAL
(N = 209)

Total Years of Experience	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
3 years or less	10	34.5	13	46.4	21	26.9	19	25.7	63	30.1
4 - 6 years	0		2	7.1	13	16.7	7	9.5	22	10.5
7 - 9 years	4	13.8	3	10.7	4	5.1	13	17.6	24	11.5
10 - 12 years	3	10.3	3	10.7	14	17.9	11	14.9	31	14.8
13 - 15 years	5	17.2	1	3.6	6	7.7	6	8.1	18	8.6
16 - 18 years	2	6.9	1	3.6	7	9.0	6	8.1	16	7.7
19 - 21 years	0		3	10.7	2	2.6	6	8.1	11	5.3
22 years or more	5	17.2	2	7.1	11	14.1	6	8.1	24	11.5
Total	29		28		74		74		209	100.0
Mean*	10.93		8.96		10.76		9.60			
S.D.	9.41		9.78		8.83		7.76			

*F ratio: .49; not significant

TABLE XI

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
WITH WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED

(N = 205)

Number of Schools	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fewer than 3 schools	11	36.7	12	44.4	23	31.1	28	37.8	74	36.1
4 - 6	9	30.0	12	44.4	37	50.0	34	45.9	92	44.9
7 - 9	8	26.7	2	7.4	9	12.2	8	10.8	27	13.2
10 - 12	2	6.7	1	3.7	3	4.1	4	5.4	10	4.9
13 schools or more	0		0		2	2.7	0		2	1.0
Total	30		27		74		74		205	100.1
Mean*	5.10		4.29		4.59		4.29			
S.D.	2.52		2.52		3.08		2.49			

*F ratio: .73; not significant

schools planning not to semester have been associated with an average of 5.10 schools while principals of conventional schools planning to semester and principals whose schools are completely semestered have both been associated with an average of 4.29 schools. Principals whose schools are partially semestered have been associated with an average of 4.59 schools either as a teacher, vice-principal, principal or in some other way. An analysis of variance test revealed no significant difference between the mean number of schools with which the four categories of principals have been associated.

The number of A.T.A. Specialist Councils to which principals belong. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester belong to an average of 1.00 A.T.A. Specialist Councils, principals of conventional schools planning to semester belong to an average of 1.07 Specialist Councils while principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered belong to an average of 1.13 and .97 A.T.A. Specialist Councils, respectively. An analysis of variance test indicates that there is no significant difference between the four categories of principals and the mean number of Specialist Councils they belong to. A further examination of Table XII which summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals according to the number of A.T.A. Specialist Councils to which they belong shows that in all four categories the greatest percentage of principals belong to only one Specialist Council. In three of the four categories the next greatest proportion of principals do not belong to any Specialist Council; in the fourth category, that is, principals of conventional schools planning to semester, the same number belong to two Specialist Councils as belong to no Specialist Council.

TABLE XII

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY NUMBER OF A.T.A. SPECIALIST COUNCILS TO WHICH THEY BELONG

(N = 212)

Number of A.T.A. Specialist Councils	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	8	26.7	8	28.6	23	29.5	19	25.0	58	27.4
One	15	50.0	11	39.2	41	52.6	33	43.4	100	47.2
Two	6	20.0	8	28.6	10	12.8	18	23.7	42	19.8
Three	1	3.3	1	3.6	2	2.6	6	7.9	10	4.7
Four or more	0		0		2	2.6	0		2	1.0
Total	30		28		78		76		212	
Mean*		1.00		1.07		.97		1.13		
S.D.		.78		.86		.98		.89		

*F ratio: .41; not significant

The number of educational organizations to which principals belong. An examination of Table XIII which summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals according to the number of educational organizations to which they belong shows that in all four categories the distributions are positively skewed with from 63.3 per cent to 80.3 per cent of principals belonging to no educational organization. Analysis by category reveals that principals of conventional schools planning not to semester belong to an average of .50 organizations, principals of conventional schools planning to semester belong to an average of .25 organizations, principals whose schools are completely semestered schools belong to an average of .23 organizations while principals whose schools are partially semestered schools belong to an average of .34 educational organizations. There were no significant differences between these means.

The number of professional journals read. Table XIV summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals according to the number of educational journals they regularly read. In all four categories of principals the distributions tend to be normally distributed between zero and five educational journals regularly read. No significant differences were found between the four categories of principals on mean number of journals regularly read.

III. SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Grades contained in the school. Table XV summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals according to the grades taught in their school. The most frequently occurring grade sequence was grades one to twelve; 46.5 per cent of all principals reported that

TABLE XIII

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY NUMBER OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH THEY BELONG

(N = 212)

Number of Educational Organizations	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	19	63.3	21	75.0	56	71.8	61	80.3	157	74.1
One	8	26.7	7	25.0	17	21.8	12	15.8	44	20.8
Two	2	6.7	0		5	6.4	3	3.9	10	4.7
Three	1	3.4	0		0		0		1	.5
Total	30		28		78		76		212	100.0
Mean*		.50		.25		.34		.23		
S.D.		.78		.44		.60		.51		

*F ratio: 1.70; not significant

TABLE XIV

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS READ

(N = 212)

Number of Professional Journals Read	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	2	6.7	3	10.7	8	10.3	7	9.2	20	9.4
One	6	20.0	6	21.4	15	19.2	14	18.4	41	19.3
Two	7	23.3	7	25.0	29	37.2	28	36.8	71	33.5
Three	10	33.3	6	21.4	15	19.2	18	23.7	49	23.1
Four	1	3.3	6	21.4	6	7.7	2	2.6	15	7.1
Five	4	13.3	0		5	6.4	7	9.2	16	7.5
Total	30		28		78		76		212	99.9
Mean*		2.47		2.21		2.11		2.17		
S.D.		1.41		1.32		1.31		1.32		

*F ratio: .53; not significant

TABLE XV

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRINCIPALS ACCORDING TO THE GRADES
TAUGHT IN THEIR SCHOOLS

(N = 213)

Grades in School	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1 - 12	13	43.3	9	33.3	43	54.4	34	44.2	99	46.5
4 - 12	0	0.0	1	3.7	0	0.0	1	1.3	2	.9
7 - 12	7	23.3	6	22.2	14	17.7	18	23.4	45	21.1
8 - 12	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.3	0	0.0	1	.5
9 - 12	0	0.0	1	3.7	4	5.1	4	5.2	9	4.2
10 - 12	10	33.3	10	37.0	17	21.5	20	26.0	57	26.8
Total	30		27		79		77		213	100.0

their schools contained these grades.

Number of teachers, students and part-time students. An examination of Table XVI reveals that principals of conventional schools planning not to semester on the average reported the highest number of teachers, students and part-time students while principals whose schools are partially semestered reported the lowest number of teachers and students and principals of conventional schools intending to semester reported having the lowest number of part-time students. An analysis of variance test revealed no significant difference between the four categories of principals and the mean number of teachers, students and part-time students under their jurisdiction.

IV. INFORMATION PERTAINING TO SEMESTERING

The decision to adopt or reject. An examination of Table XVII which summarizes the distribution of the four categories of principals according to whether or not they had the final decision to adopt the semester system shows that 72.4 per cent of the principals of conventional schools planning not to adopt the semester system claimed they had the final decision to reject or adopt the semester system. On the other hand only 49.4 per cent of the principals whose schools are completely semestered reported that they had the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system. At least 60 per cent of the principals in the other two categories indicated they had the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system.

An attempt was made to identify the persons who did have the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system. This was done by asking principals who claimed they did not have the final decision

TABLE XVI
 MEAN NUMBER OF TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PART-TIME STUDENTS BY
 THE TYPE OF SCHOOL YEAR ORGANIZATION

(N = 214)

	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		F ratio	Signi- ficance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Teachers	23.33	24.04	22.14	27.47	17.06	22.28	17.87	20.12	.81	N.S.
Students	400.80	485.39	372.11	515.29	275.49	394.42	292.36	385.76	.88	N.S.
Part-time Students	10.77	21.30	4.75	15.24	7.53	19.80	6.17	18.21	.60	N.S.

TABLE XVII
 PERCENTAGE OF PRINCIPALS HAVING THE FINAL DECISION TO
 ADOPT OR REJECT THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

(N = 212)

Had Final Decision	Conventional Schools not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	21	72.4	18	64.3	53	67.9	38	49.4	130	61.3
No	8	27.6	10	35.7	25	32.1	39	50.6	82	38.7
Total	29		28		78		77		212	100.0

the questions, "rank the following according to the degree of importance you feel they had in the decision to adopt or not adopt the semester system in your school." In order to determine a composite ranking of these positions, the following procedure was followed. A person ranked as most important by the principal was given a score of five, a person ranked as second in importance was given a score of four while a person ranked as least important was given a score of three. Table XVIII summarizes these scores and the rankings obtained. Principals of three of the four categories ranked the superintendent as being most important in the decision to adopt or reject the semester system; the exception was principals of conventional schools planning to semester who ranked the school staff as having the most influence in their decision to adopt the semester system. Over-all, the superintendent was ranked first, the school staff second, and the school board third in degree of importance in the decision to adopt or reject the semester system.

Number of schools observed. Table XIX presents a distribution of the number of school principals in the four categories visited to observe the semester system in operation. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester visited an average of 1.27 schools, principals of conventional schools planning to semester, visited an average of 1.54 schools, principals whose schools are completely semestered visited an average of .62 schools while principals whose schools are partially semestered visited an average of .67 schools. An analysis of variance test revealed that principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered had a significantly lower average than did principals of conventional schools planning to semester. These were significant at the .05 level of significance. No significant

TABLE XVIII

RANKINGS ACCORDING TO IMPORTANCE IN DECISION TO
ADOPT OR REJECT THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

(N = 92)

	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total Final Score Rank	
	Score (N = 11)	Rank	Score (N = 13)	Rank	Score (N = 28)	Rank	Score (N = 40)	Rank	Score	Rank
Superintendent	21	1	21	3	76	1	106	1	224	1
School Board	7	5	28	2	63	3.5	96	3	194	3
Superintendent and School Board	16	2	17	4	63	3.5	66	4	162	4
School Staff	14	3.5	30	1	68	2	97	2	209	2
Other	14	3.5	3	5	15	5	15	5	47	5

TABLE XIX

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OBSERVED EMPLOYING THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

(N = 165)

Number of Schools Observed	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	9	32.1	7	25.0	31	53.4	29	56.9	76	46.1
One	5	17.9	9	32.1	9	15.5	9	17.6	32	19.4
Two	10	35.7	5	17.9	11	19.0	5	9.8	31	18.8
Three	3	10.7	4	14.3	6	10.3	3	5.9	16	9.7
Four or more	1	3.6	3	10.7	1	1.7	5	9.8	10	6.1
Total	28		28		58		51		165	100.1
Mean*		1.27		1.54		.67		.62		
S.D.		1.17		1.32		1.06		1.18		

*F ratio: 6.21; significant

difference was found between principals of conventional schools planning not to semester and the other three categories of principals.

The number of administrators with whom the semester system was discussed. Table XX which presents a distribution of the number of administrators with whom the four categories of principals discussed the semester system prior to the decision to adopt or reject reveals that the distribution of frequencies is negatively skewed. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester indicated that they discussed the semester system with an average of 3.27 administrators; principals of conventional schools planning to semester discussed the semester system with an average of 3.54 administrators; and principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered discussed the semester system with an average of 2.17 and 2.37 administrators, respectively. The Scheffe test indicated that principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly higher mean score than did principals whose schools are completely semestered. Principals of conventional schools planning to semester had a higher mean score than principals of either completely or partially semestered schools. These mean scores were statistically different at the .05 level of significance.

Ranking of information sources. Principals were asked to rank, according to degree of importance, the sources of information they relied on most heavily in their decision to adopt or reject the semester system. A ranking of first importance was given a score of five, a ranking of second importance was given a score of four and a ranking of third importance was given a score of three. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester ranked teachers as the primary source of information, observations of other schools as second in importance

TABLE XX

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINCIPALS BY THE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS

WITH WHOM THEY DISCUSSED THE SEMESTER SYSTEM PRIOR TO ADOPTION OR REJECTION

(N = 165)

Number of Administrators	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.4	3	5.9	5	3.0
One	1	3.6	0	0.0	3	5.2	1	2.0	5	3.0
Two	4	14.3	2	7.1	7	12.1	5	9.8	18	10.9
Three	3	10.7	9	32.1	10	17.2	12	23.5	34	20.6
Four or more	20	71.4	17	60.7	36	62.1	30	58.8	103	62.4
Total	28		28		58		51		165	99.9
Mean*	3.27		3.54		2.37		2.17			
S.D.	1.23		.64		1.75		1.80			

*F ratio: 7.30; Significant

and the advice of other principals as the third source of information in their decision to reject the semester system. Principals in the other three categories ranked the advice of other principals as being the primary source of information with principals of completely and partially semestered schools ranking the superintendent as the second most important source of information and observation of other schools being ranked third. Principals of conventional schools planning to semester ranked observations of other schools as of secondary importance with the superintendent ranked as the third most important source of information. In total, the advice of other principals was ranked as the primary source of information, observations of other schools was ranked as the second most important source of information and the superintendent as the third most important source of information in the decisions to adopt or reject the semester system. Table XXI summarizes the rankings of the various sources of information.

Year semestered. An examination of Table XXII shows that 88.9 per cent of the completely semestered schools were semestered within a two year period. In 1968, 51.4 per cent of them and in 1967 37.5 per cent of them adopted the complete semester system. Of the partially semestered schools 70.1 per cent became partially semestered in 1968 while 16.9 per cent were partially semestered in 1967. Thus 87 per cent of these schools became partially semestered during the years 1967 and 1968.

V. SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to present data describing the four categories of principals which comprise the sample on a number of

TABLE XXI

RANKING OF SOURCES OF INFORMATION ACCORDING TO THEIR IMPORTANCE
IN THE DECISION TO ADOPT OR REJECT THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

Sources of Information	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Total	Final
	Score (N = 24)	Rank	Score (N = 25)	Rank	Score (N = 55)	Rank	Score (N = 50)	Rank		
Observations of other schools	50	2	57	2	99	3	92	3	298	2
Advice of other principals	48	3	76	1	150	1	144	1	418	1
Information from professional organizations	27	5	43	4	78	4	41	4	189	5
Information from professional meetings	39	4	28		61		39		167	
Superintendent	16		51	3	110	2	99	2	276	3
District Personnel	10		0		3		8		21	
Teachers	52	1	32	5	72	5	40	5	196	4
Professional Journals	12		7		27		36		82	
Department of Education	3		10		13		16		42	
School Board Members	6		8		0		0		14	
Other	11		14		12		16		53	

TABLE XXII
 DISTRIBUTION OF THE SCHOOLS BY YEAR
 IN WHICH THEY WERE SEMESTERED
 (N = 149)

Year Semestered	<u>Partially Semestered</u>		<u>Completely Semestered</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1968	54	70.1	37	51.4	91	61.1
1967	13	16.9	27	37.5	40	26.8
1966	6	7.8	4	5.6	10	6.7
1963	2	2.6	1	1.4	3	2.0
1960	0	0.0	1	1.4	1	.8
1959 and before	2	2.6	2	2.8	4	2.7
Totals	77		72		149	100.0

personal and professional variables, on the characteristics of their school and on selected information pertaining to the semester system. Table XXIII summarized the means and standard deviations (S.D.) of the four categories of principals on these variables.

No significant differences were found between the four categories of principals on the characteristics of their school. No significant differences were found between the four categories of principal on personal and professional variables with the exception of: (1) the number of schools they observed and, (2) the number of administrators with whom they discussed the semester system prior to the decision to adopt or reject the semester system. With respect to the first of these the principals of conventional schools planning to semester had observed a significant number more than had the principals of completely or partially semestered schools. In the case of number of administrators with whom the semester system was discussed, principals of conventional schools planning not to semester discussed the semester system with a significantly greater number of administrators than had principals whose schools are completely semestered. Principals of conventional schools planning to semester also discussed the semester system with a significantly greater number of administrators than had the principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered. The reason for the significant differences in both cases may be due to the fact that when the principals of completely and partially semestered schools did decide to semester there were fewer schools semestered and consequently fewer administrators with whom to discuss the semester system.

When the principals who indicated they did not have the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system were asked to rank

TABLE XXIII

SUMMARY OF THE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF
PRINCIPALS ON SELECTED PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL VARIABLES

Variables	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Signi- fiance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Age	47.2	2.40	47.4	2.17	46.4	2.22	45.3	2.12	N.S.
Number of years of education for which principals are paid	5.0	.95	4.68	.90	4.86	1.02	4.86	1.06	N.S.
Recency of education	2.47	1.33	2.21	1.26	2.41	1.29	2.42	1.32	N.S.
Years experience as principal in present school	5.73	5.39	4.71	6.12	7.48	11.47	5.53	5.61	N.S.
Total years experience as principal	10.93	9.41	8.96	9.78	10.76	8.83	9.60	7.76	N.S.
Number of schools with which principals have been associated	5.10	2.52	4.29	2.52	4.59	3.08	4.29	2.49	N.S.
Number of A.T.A. Specialist Councils to which principals belong	1.00	.78	1.07	.86	.97	.98	1.13	.89	N.S.
Number of educational organizations to which principals belong	.50	.78	.25	.44	.34	.60	.23	.51	N.S.
Number of professional journals read	2.47	1.41	2.21	1.32	2.11	1.31	2.17	1.32	N.S.
Number of teachers	23.33	24.05	22.14	27.47	17.06	22.28	17.87	20.12	N.S.
Number of full-time students	400.80	485.39	372.11	515.29	275.49	394.42	292.36	385.76	N.S.
Number of part-time students	10.77	21.30	4.75	15.25	7.53	19.80	6.17	18.21	N.S.
Number of schools observed employing the semester system	1.27	1.17	1.54	1.32	.67	1.06	.62	1.18	.05
Number of administrators with whom principals discussed the semester system	3.27	1.23	3.54	.64	2.37	1.75	2.17	1.80	.05

those whom they felt were important in making the decision, the superintendent was ranked first, the school staff second and the school board third.

From the rankings that principals were asked to make regarding what they felt to be the important sources of information a composite ranking was made. The advice of other principals ranked as the most important source of information, observations of other schools as second and the superintendent was ranked as the third most important source of information relied on in making the decision to adopt or reject the semester system.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The methods used to determine whether there were any significant differences between the four categories of principals, namely; (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, on their perceptions of the characteristics of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year were the Scheffe Multiple Comparison of Means and where the assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test was employed.

I. PERCEPTION OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school term as compared with the conventional school year.

Findings. With regard to the advantages of the shorter school term an examination of Table XXIV reveals that there was a significant difference between the four categories of principals on their responses to items 1, 2 and 4. In the case of item 1: "the shorter school term increases student motivation," and item 2: "the student acquires more effective work habits under the shorter school term," the principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower

TABLE XXIV

MEAN SCORES OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS ON PERCEIVED
ADVANTAGES OF THE SHORTER SCHOOL TERM

Item No.	Advantages of the Shorter School Term	I		II		III		IV		Means Significantly Different
		Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		
		Mean (N = 30)	S.D.	Mean (N = 28)	S.D.	Mean (N = 79)	S.D.	Mean (N = 77)	S.D.	
1	Increases student motivation	3.20	.89	3.89	.69	3.86	.80	4.03	.73	I-II ^b I-III ^c I-IV ^c
2	Student acquires more effective work habits	2.80	1.00	3.54	.69	3.54	.84	3.77	.81	I-II ^a I-III ^c I-IV ^c
4	Student achieves better academic results*	2.73	.74	3.32	.55	3.35	.86	3.70	.87	I-III ^b I-IV ^c
7	Student can complete program earlier	3.97	.93	4.36	.56	4.22	.76	4.31	.80	N.S.
8	Adult student can complete program earlier	4.07	.83	4.46	.51	4.34	.64	4.38	.69	N.S.
9	Student can repeat course in same academic year	3.67	.99	4.04	.79	3.89	.91	4.06	.71	N.S.
10	Student can shift program at semester break	3.67	.80	3.86	.85	3.99	.76	4.09	.67	N.S.

Levels of Significance: a - .05 level

b - .01 level

c - .001 level

N.S. - not significant at .05 level

*The Kruskal-Wallis Test was used

score than the other three categories of principals. On item 4: "the student achieves better academic results under the shorter school term," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower score than the principals whose schools are completely and partially semester. Research hypothesis 1 was therefore accepted for these three items. Null hypothesis 1 that there are no significant differences was accepted for items 7, 8, 9 and 10.

With regard to the disadvantages of the shorter school term an examination of Table XXV indicates that there was a significant difference between the four categories of principals on their responses to items 3, 5 and 6. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than the other three categories of principals on item 3: "presenting a student with a full course under the shorter school term leads to superficiality in learning." That is, principals planning not to semester perceived this item as more of a disadvantage than the other three categories of principals. Furthermore with regard to item 3, principals whose schools are completely semestered had a significantly higher mean and they perceived this item as less of a disadvantage than principals whose schools are partially semestered. In the case of item 5: "without a sequential follow-up in the second semester a student forgets more by September," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean and thus perceived this item as more of a disadvantage than the other three categories of principals. On item 6: "the shorter school term increases the stress under which a student must work," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean and thus perceived this item as more of a disadvantage than principals whose

TABLE XXV

MEAN SCORES OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS ON PERCEIVED
DISADVANTAGES OF THE SHORTER SCHOOL TERM

Item No.	Disadvantages of the Shorter School Term	I		II		III		IV		Means Significantly Different
		Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester	S.D. (N = 30)	Conventional Schools Intending to Semester	Mean (N = 28)	S.D. (N = 28)	Partially Semestered Schools	Mean (N = 79)	S.D. (N = 77)	
3	Presenting a full course leads to superficiality in learning*	2.47	.97	3.64	.83	3.30	.99	3.91	.67	I-II ^c I-III ^c I-IV ^c III-IV ^c
5	Without a sequential follow-up in the second semester a student forgets more by Sept.	2.17	.70	2.96	.84	2.94	.88	3.17	.94	I-II ^b I-III ^c I-IV ^c
6	Increases the stress under which a student must work	2.70	.95	3.18	1.09	3.48	1.00	3.66	.94	I-III ^c I-IV ^b
24	Transfer students are difficult to accommodate	1.50	.68	1.89	.68	1.82	.67	1.86	.72	N.S.

Levels of Significance: a - .05 level b - .01 level c - .001 level
N.S. - not significant at .05 level

*The Kruskal-Wallis Test was used.

schools are completely or partially semestered. Research hypothesis 1 was therefore accepted for these three items. Null hypothesis 1 that there are no significant differences between the four categories of principals was accepted for item 24: "students who are required to transfer to other schools during the school year are difficult to accommodate into the other school's program."

Therefore, as shown, research hypothesis 1 was accepted for items 1, 2, 4, 3, 5, and 6 while the null hypothesis was accepted for items 7, 8, 9, 10 and 24.

Discussion. Significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of principals on six of the eleven items dealing with the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school term. These significant differences are reported in Tables XXIV and ~~XXV~~.

In reference to item 1, Table XXIV, all four categories of principals felt that the shorter school term would increase student motivation, although principals of conventional schools planning not to semester, on the whole, had a significantly lower score than the other three groups.

In reference to item 2, Table XXIV, principals of conventional schools planning to semester, as well as principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered, on the average, felt that the student does acquire more effective work habits as a result of the shorter school term. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester did not perceive this as an advantage of the shorter school term.

With respect to item 4: "the student achieves better academic results under the shorter school term," principals of conventional

schools planning not to semester perceived this as not being the case whereas principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered felt that the student did achieve better academic results under the shorter school term. However, Fehlberg, in a study cited earlier, did not find evidence to support his hypothesis that students enrolled under the semester system of school term organization would obtain lower achievement scores than students enrolled under the conventional type of school year organization.

In reference to the perceived disadvantages of the shorter school term (Table XXV), and the idea that presenting a full course during a shorter school term leads to superficiality in learning, principals of conventional schools planning not to semester felt this was a disadvantage of the shorter school term. Principals in the other three categories felt this was not a disadvantage.

In reference to the idea that due to the shorter school term a student without a sequential follow-up in the second semester will forget more by the following September principals in three of the four categories perceived this as a disadvantage of the shorter school term. On the whole, principals whose schools are completely semestered did not perceive this as a disadvantage. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester perceive this to be a greater disadvantage than do the other three categories of principals as reflected by their significantly lower mean score on this item.

Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester apparently feel that the shorter school term increases the stress under which a student must work whereas principals in the other three categories do not feel that the shorter school term increases stress.

On the advantage items where no significant differences were found between the four categories of principals, all categories perceived these as advantages of the shorter school term as reflected by their mean scores. On the disadvantage item where no significant difference between the four categories was found their mean scores signify the item was perceived as a disadvantage of the shorter school term.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period found in the semester system as compared with the shorter classroom period found in schools on the conventional school year.

Findings. With regard to the advantages of the longer classroom period an examination of Table XXVI reveals that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the four categories of principals on all the perceived advantages dealing with longer classroom period. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower score than the other three categories of principals on items 12, 14, 15, 20 and 21. On item 16: "the longer classroom period allows for a more efficient use of class time in academic classes," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered whereas principals of conventional schools planning to semester had a significantly lower score than principals whose schools are completely semestered. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a lower score than principals whose schools are completely semestered on item 32: "the longer class-

TABLE XXVI

MEAN SCORES OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS ON PERCEIVED
ADVANTAGES OF THE LONGER CLASSROOM PERIOD

Item No.	Advantages of the Longer Classroom Period	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Means Signi- ficantly Differ- ent
		Mean (N = 30)	S.D.	Mean (N = 28)	S.D.	Mean (N = 79)	S.D.	Mean (N = 77)	S.D.	
12	Increases variety of instructional materials*	3.27	1.05	4.18	.72	4.08	.78	4.35	.64	I-II ^c I-III ^c I-IV ^c
14	Encourages more effective teaching	3.23	.73	4.00	.61	4.10	.73	4.08	.68	I-III ^c I-III ^c I-IV ^c
15	Permits subject to be studied in greater depth	2.60	.87	3.54	.84	3.41	1.12	3.56	.91	I-II ^b I-III ^c I-IV ^b
16	More efficient use of class time in academic classes	2.67	.99	3.14	.76	3.46	.92	3.82	.76	I-III ^c I-IV ^c II-III ^b
17	Easier scheduling of laboratory classes	3.60	.89	4.07	.72	3.95	.85	4.16	.73	I-III ^a
20	Increased student satisfaction	2.87	.73	3.57	.69	3.57	.67	3.71	.65	I-II ^b I-III ^c I-IV ^c
21	Increased teacher satisfaction	2.87	.90	3.68	.61	3.62	.74	3.90	.74	I-II ^c I-III ^c I-IV ^c
32 +	More effective utilization of community resources	2.93	1.01	3.54	.79	3.42	.90	3.77	.79	I-III ^c

Levels of significance: a - .05 level; b - .01 level; c - .001 level. *The Kruskal-Wallis Test was used

room period allows for a more effective utilization of community resources," and on item 17: "the longer classroom period allows for an easier scheduling of laboratory classes." Therefore, research hypothesis 2 was accepted for all the items dealing with the advantages of the longer classroom period.

With regard to the disadvantages of the longer classroom period an examination of Table XXVII reveals that there was a significant difference between the four categories of principals on their mean scores on items 18 and 19 and no significant difference between them on item 13. In the case of item 18: "the experienced teacher finds it difficult to adjust to the longer classroom period," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered and principals of conventional schools planning to semester had a significantly lower score than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered. On item 19: "the student finds it difficult to adjust to the longer classroom period," principals of conventional schools not planning to semester had a significantly lower score than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered whereas principals of conventional schools planning to semester had a significantly lower score than only one of these, namely, principals whose schools are completely semestered. Therefore, research hypothesis 2 was accepted for items 18 and 19 but the null hypothesis 2 that there are no significant differences between the four categories of principals was accepted for item 13: "the teacher must spend more time preparing lessons due to the longer classroom period."

In brief, research hypothesis 2 was accepted for items 12, 14, 15,

TABLE XXVII

MEAN SCORES OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS ON PERCEIVED
DISADVANTAGES OF THE LONGER CLASSROOM PERIOD

Item No.	Disadvantages of the Longer Classroom Period	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Means Signi- ficantly different
		Mean (N = 30)	S.D.	Mean (N = 28)	S.D.	Mean (N = 79)	S.D.	Mean (N = 77)	S.D.	
13	Teacher must spend more time preparing lessons	2.57	.97	2.29	1.15	2.41	1.15	2.61	1.19	N.S.
18	Experienced teacher finds it difficult to adjust	2.90	1.03	3.14	.85	3.77	.83	3.92	.91	I-III ^c I-IV ^c II-III ^b II-IV ^a
19	The student finds it difficult to adjust	2.67	.80	2.96	.84	3.48	.88	3.78	.86	I-III ^c I-IV ^c II-III ^c

Levels of Significance: a - .05 level b - .01 level c - .001 level
N.S. - not significant at .05 level

16, 32, 20, 21, 17, 18, and 19 while the null hypothesis was accepted for item 13.

Discussion. Significant differences between the four categories of principals were found on 10 of the 11 items dealing with the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period. These significant differences are reported in Tables XXVI and XXVII.

In reference to item 12: "the longer classroom period increases the variety of instructional materials used," and item 14: "the longer classroom period encourages more effective teaching," all four categories of principals agreed that these items were advantages of the longer classroom period. However, in both cases, principals planning not to semester, on the average, apparently did not perceive these items as quite the advantage that the other three groups thought they were; their mean scores on these two items were 3.27 and 3.23, respectively.

In the case of the following items, item 15: "the longer period permits a subject to be studied in greater depth," item 20: "a student feels greater satisfaction when able to pursue a topic through a longer period of time," and item 21: "a teacher feels greater satisfaction when able to pursue a topic through a longer period of class time," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester did not perceive these as advantages of the longer classroom period whereas the other three categories of principals did perceive these three items as advantages of the longer classroom period.

On item 16: "the longer classroom period makes for a more effective utilization of class time in academic classes," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester felt that this was not an advantage of the longer classroom period; the other three categories

of principals on the whole did perceive this as an advantage, although, on the average, principals of conventional schools planning to semester felt it was only slightly advantageous.

The idea that the longer classroom period makes for easier scheduling of laboratory classes (item 17) was seen by all categories as an advantage, although principals of conventional schools planning not to semester apparently did not perceive this as quite the advantage that the other three categories of principals perceived it to be.

In the case of item 32: "the longer classroom period results in a more effective utilization of community resources," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester did not see this as an advantage and as a result had a significantly lower score than principals whose schools are completely semestered and who perceived this as an advantage of the longer classroom period. The other two categories of principals also perceived this as an advantage.

In reference to the perceived disadvantages of the longer classroom period and the idea that the experienced teacher finds it difficult to adjust to the longer classroom period, principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered felt that the experienced teacher was able to adjust and thus they did not perceive this as a disadvantage. Principals of conventional schools planning to semester also felt that experienced teachers could adjust, although their mean score of 3.14 was significantly lower than the principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester, on the average, felt that the experienced teacher would have difficulty in adjusting to the longer classroom period. This group had a significantly lower score than principals whose schools are

completely or partially semestered.

With regard to the idea that the student would have trouble adjusting to the increased classroom time both the principals of conventional schools planning not to semester and principals of conventional schools planning to semester perceived the student as having trouble in adjusting to the longer classroom period whereas principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered felt the student did not have trouble adjusting to the longer classroom period.

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the administrative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

Findings. An examination of Table XXVIII reveals that there was a significant difference between the four categories of principals on their mean scores for all four of the perceived administrative advantages of the semester system. On item 11: "the semester system allows for a more varied curriculum to be offered," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered. On item 26: "the semester system allows for a more effective placement of staff," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than principals whose schools are completely semestered. On item 28: "the semester system allows for a more effective placement of students," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than had the other three categories of principals. On item 31: "the semester system

TABLE XXVIII

MEAN SCORES OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS ON PERCEIVED ADMINISTRATIVE ADVANTAGES OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

Item No.	Administrative Advantages of the Semester System	Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester		Conventional Schools Intending to Semester		Partially Semestered Schools		Completely Semestered Schools		Means Significantly Different
		Mean (N = 30)	S.D.	Mean (N = 28)	S.D.	Mean (N = 79)	S.D.	Mean (N = 77)	S.D.	
11	Able to offer a more varied curriculum	2.40	.93	3.00	.90	3.10	1.08	3.36	1.06	I-III ^c I-IV ^a
26	More effective placement of staff	2.97	1.03	3.36	.83	3.47	.93	3.81	.81	I-III ^c
28	More effective placement of students	2.73	.83	3.43	.74	3.44	1.03	3.73	.77	I-II ^a I-III ^b I-IV ^c
31	More effective utilization of school facilities*	2.73	1.01	3.64	.83	3.57	.94	4.00	.63	I-II ^c I-III ^c I-IV ^c III-IV ^a

Levels of Significance: ^a - .05 level ^b - .01 level ^c - .001 level
 *The Kruskal-Wallis Test was used

allows for a more effective utilization of school facilities," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower score than the other three categories of principals whereas principals of completely semestered schools had a significantly higher mean score than did principals of partially semestered schools. Therefore, research hypothesis 3 was accepted for all the items dealing with the perceived administrative advantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

With regard to the administrative disadvantages of the semester system, an examination of Table XXIX shows that there were significant differences between mean scores of the four categories of principals on items 25, 27 and 35. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than principals whose schools are completely semestered on item 25: "supervision of teachers becomes more of a problem under the semester system." In the case of item 27: "Scheduling of an individual student program is more difficult under the semester system," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than the other three categories of principals whereas principals whose schools are completely semestered had a significantly higher mean score than principals whose schools are partially semestered. On item 35: "it is difficult to adopt only a partially semestered program," principals of partially semestered schools had a significantly higher score than had the other three categories of principals. Research hypothesis 3 was therefore accepted for items 25, 27 and 35. Null hypothesis 3 that there were no significant differences between the four categories of principals was accepted for items 22, 23 and 29 which dealt, in general, with the increased administrative burden

TABLE XXIX

MEAN SCORES OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS ON PERCEIVED
ADMINISTRATIVE DISADVANTAGES OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

Item No.	Administrative Disadvantages of the Semester System	I		II		III		IV		Means Signi- ficantly Different
		Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester	S.D.	Conventional Schools Intending to Semester	Mean (N = 28)	Partially Semestered Schools	Mean (N = 79)	Completely Semestered Schools	Mean (N = 77)	
22	Additional burden by requiring two registrations per year	2.07	.74	2.14	.80	2.23	.93	2.38	1.12	N.S.
23	Additional burden by requiring the setting, marking and recording of two sets of final exams	2.40	1.00	2.71	1.05	2.65	1.05	2.83	1.12	N.S.
25	Supervision of teachers becomes more of a problem	3.23	.82	3.61	.57	3.51	.90	3.82	.88	I-III ^a
27	Scheduling of an individual student program is more difficult*	2.97	.81	3.61	.74	3.52	1.00	3.91	.71	I-III ^a I-III ^a I-III ^a I-IV ^c III-IV ^a
29	Increases the over-all administrative problems	2.63	.72	2.82	.90	3.01	.95	3.04	1.03	N.S.
35	Difficult to adopt only a partially semestered program	2.90	1.03	3.04	1.00	3.71	1.01	2.66	1.07	I-IV ^b II-IV ^a III-IV ^c

Levels of Significance: a - .05 level b - .01 level c - .001 level
N.S. - Not Significant at the .05 level
*The Kruskal-Wallis test was used

of the semester system.

In review, research hypothesis 3 was accepted for items 26, 28, 31, 11, 25, 27 and 35 while null hypothesis 3 was accepted for items 22, 23 and 29.

Discussion. Significant differences between the mean scores of the four categories of principals were found on 7 of the 10 items dealing with the perceived administrative advantages or disadvantages of the semester system. These significant differences are reported in Tables XXVIII and XXIX.

With respect to item 11: "under the semester system there is a greater variety in curriculum offering," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester feel this is not an advantage of the semester system and principals of conventional schools planning to semester are undecided. On the other hand principals whose schools are partially semestered see this as a slight advantage of the semester system and principals whose schools are completely semestered, on the average, perceive it as more of an advantage of the semester system than do the other three categories of principals.

On item 26: "the semester system allows for a more effective placement of staff," and item 28: "the semester system allows for a more effective placement of students," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester felt these items were not administrative advantages of the semester system. Principals in the other three categories saw these items as administrative advantages.

With respect to item 31: "the semester system allows for a more effective utilization of school facilities," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester felt this was not an administrative

advantage of the semester system whereas the other three categories of principals did perceive this to be an administrative advantage of the semester system. Furthermore, principals whose schools are completely semestered felt that the semester system allowed for a more effective utilization of school facilities than did principals whose schools are only partially semestered.

In reference to the perceived administrative disadvantages of the semester system significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of principals on items 25, 27 and 35. On item 25: "supervision of teachers becomes more of a problem under the semester system," on the average all four categories of principals felt that this was not the case, although principals of conventional schools planning not to semester were not as convinced of this idea as were principals whose schools are completely semestered.

On item 27: "the scheduling of an individual student program is more difficult under the semester system," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester, on the whole, perceive this as only a slight disadvantage whereas the other three categories of principals don't see this as a disadvantage of the semester system.

On item 35: "it is difficult to adopt only a partially semestered program," principals of partially semestered schools disagree with this item as reflected by their score which was significantly higher than that of any of the other three categories of principals. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester and principals of conventional schools planning to semester seem to feel that it is difficult to adopt only a partially semestered program; on the whole principals of completely semestered schools are undecided.

Hypothesis 4: There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the compatibility of the semester system with the existing values and past experiences of the principals, teachers and students.

Findings. An examination of Table XXX reveals that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the four categories of the principals with respect to the three items dealing with the perceived compatibility of the semester system. On item 30: "the semester system is more in line with the principal's goal of education," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean than the principals of the other three categories. On item 33: "the semester system is readily accepted by teachers," principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower mean score than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered, whereas principals whose schools are completely semestered had a significantly higher mean than either principals of conventional schools planning to semester or principals whose schools are partially semestered. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly lower score than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered on item 34: "the semester system is readily accepted by students." Therefore, research hypothesis 4 was accepted on items 30, 33 and 34.

Discussion. Significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of principals on all three items dealing with the perceived compatibility of the semester system. These significant differences are reported in Table XXX.

TABLE XXX

MEAN SCORES OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS ON PERCEIVED
COMPATABILITY OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

Item No.	Comatability of the Semester System	I		II		III		IV		Means Signi- ficantly Different
		Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester	S.D. (N = 30)	Conventional Schools Intending to Semester	S.D. (N = 28)	Partially Semestered Schools	S.D. (N = 79)	Completely Semestered Schools	S.D. (N = 77)	
30	Semester system is more in line with principal goals of education	2.33	.99	3.21	.88	3.28	1.00	3.66	.74	I-II ^b I-III ^c I-IV ^c
33	Semester system is readily accepted by teachers	2.70	.92	3.04	.79	3.49	.86	4.00	.67	I-III ^c I-IV ^c II-III ^c III-IV ^b
34	Semester system is readily accepted by students	3.37	.62	3.82	.72	3.99	.71	4.18	.77	I-III ^c I-IV ^b

Levels of Significance: ^a - .05 level

^b - .01 level

^c - .001 level

With respect to the idea that the semester system is more in line with what the principal feels to be the goals of education, principals of conventional schools not planning to semester, on the whole, apparently, did not perceive this as true in their case as reflected by their scores which were significantly lower than those of the other three categories of principals who apparently perceived the semester system to be in line with what they felt were their goals of education.

In addition, principals of conventional schools planning not to semester seem to feel that the semester system would not be readily accepted by teachers and principals of conventional schools planning to semester are not too sure if the teachers will readily accept the semester system. Principals whose schools are partially semestered seem to feel that teachers do accept the semester system whereas principals whose schools are completely semestered seem quite definite that teachers do readily accept the semester system.

On item 34: "the semester system is readily accepted by students," all four categories, on the average, perceived this to be true, although principals planning not to semester had a significantly lower score on this item than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered.

Hypothesis 5: There is a significant difference between: (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to adopt the semester system, in their perception of the communicability of the semester system as compared with the conventional school.

Findings. An examination of Table XXXI reveals that there were no significant differences between the mean scores of the four categories

TABLE XXXI

MEAN SCORES OF THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF PRINCIPALS ON PERCEIVED
COMMUNICABILITY OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

Item No.	Communicability of the Semester System	I		II		III		IV		Means Signi- ficantly Different
		Conventional Schools Not Intending to Semester	S.D.	Conventional Schools Intending to Semester	Mean (N = 38)	Partially Semestered Schools	Mean (N = 79)	Completely Semestered Schools	Mean (N = 77)	
36	Is difficult to obtain information about the semester system	3.40	.97	3.50	.96	3.48	.96	3.56	.92	N.S.
37	Is difficult to understand the semester system	4.07	.45	4.00	.38	4.00	.64	4.18	.51	N.S.
38	Is difficult to explain semester system to new students	4.10	.40	4.00	.38	4.06	.43	4.18	.42	N.S.
39	Is difficult to explain semester system to new teachers	4.10	.40	4.04	.33	4.05	.50	4.21	.41	N.S.
40	Semester system to administrative personnel	4.13	.35	3.96	.33	4.06	.49	4.21	.41	N.S.

N.S. - not significant at .01 level

of principals on any of these items: 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40, dealing with the perceived communicability of the semester system. Therefore, hypothesis 5 was rejected and null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean scores of the four categories of principals was accepted.

Discussion. No significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of principals and their perception of the communicability of the semester system. This absence of significant differences is evident in Table XXXI. On item 36: "it is difficult to obtain information about the semester system," the average scores obtained by the four categories of principals would seem to indicate that there is some doubt about whether information concerning the semester system is easy to obtain. However on the remaining four items all four categories of principals, on the average, would seem to feel that having obtained information about the semester system it would not be extremely difficult: (1) to understand the semester system, (2) to explain the semester system to new students, (3) to explain the semester system to new teachers, and (4) to explain the semester system to other administrative personnel. Thus it would seem principals perceive that it is relatively easy to inform persons about the relative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system.

Summary

The fact that no significant differences were found between the four categories of principals and the perceived communicability of the semester system could well imply that the significant differences previously found stem not from the inability to communicate about the

semester system but from general impressions or attitudes held by principals. These general impressions may be a result of direct experience with the semester system or may be a reflection of the attitudes of others who have had this experience. As previously shown there was found to be some significant differences between the four categories of principals and the number of schools they observed that employed the semester system and the number of administrators with whom they discussed the system, although it is expected that these findings would not account for all the difference, if, in fact, they accounted for any of the difference. Furthermore the differences may possibly be due to hearsay or "common sense". In part it may be a defense mechanism at work within the individual working to rationalize either a pre-determined decision to adopt or reject the semester system or a personal decision. The differences may well be accounted for by the "halo effect" whereby a general impression of favorable or unfavorable has been used by the principals to evaluate the forty items dealing with the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

II. ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Principals responding to Part III of the questionnaire were asked to list what they perceived to be further advantages or disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the non-semester system. A number of these advantages and disadvantages were simply restatements of items included in Part III of the questionnaire. The remaining advantages and disadvantages are reported in Appendix C. Of these reported, the four categories of principals most frequently cited the idea that a student

has the possibility of completing his high school program earlier and the idea that less time is wasted due to fewer class changes as being another perceived advantage of the semester system whereas the four categories of principals seemed to feel that student and teacher absenteeism is a major disadvantage of the semester system.

Question nine in Part II of the questionnaire asked principals to check whether or not they had the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system. Working on the assumption that principals who claimed they had the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system might hold stronger opinions either for or against the semester system a "t-test" was employed to see if they did perceive the characteristics of the semester system differently from those who claimed they did not have the final decision.

Principals of conventional schools planning not to adopt the semester system who claimed they had the final decision differed significantly from principals who claimed they did not have the final decision to reject the semester system on 7 of the 40 items. These items were:

- (1) shorter school term increases student motivation,
- (2) shorter school term results in more effective work habits;
- (9) shorter school term allows a student to repeat a course in the same academic year;
- (21) a teacher feels greater satisfaction when able to pursue a topic through a longer classroom period,
- (28) semester system allows for a more effective placement of students;
- (31) semester system results in a more effective utilization of school facilities, and,
- (35) it is difficult to adopt only a partially semestered program.

Principals whose schools are partially semestered who claimed they had the final decision to adopt a partially semestered system differed significantly from principals who claimed they did not have the final decision to adopt on only one item. This was item 13: "the semester system increases the time a teacher must spend in preparing lessons." Principals who claimed they had the final decision had a significantly lower mean than principals who claimed they did not have the final decision to adopt a partial semester system. This difference was significant at the .05 level.

However it should be pointed out that the difference between the principals in this latter category and in the two previously mentioned categories could well have occurred by chance as significant differences were found on only one to three of a possible forty items.

Question 1 in Section C of Part IV of the questionnaire asked principals to designate whether or not they were principal in the year prior to the adoption of either a partial or complete semester system in their present school. It was felt that principals who were instrumental in introducing the semester system into their school would possibly perceive the characteristics of the semester system differently than would those who were not in the school one year prior and therefore probably not as directly involved, if at all, in arriving at the decision to adopt the semester system in the school.

Principals of completely semestered schools who were in the school one year prior did differ significantly from principals who were not in the school one year prior to adoption on 5 of the 40 items. These items were:

- (4) a student achieves a better academic result under the semester system,
- (7) the high school student can complete his program without remaining in school a full year,
- (23) the semester system places an additional burden on the principal and his staff . . . ,
- (24) students who are required to transfer are difficult to accommodate,
- (36) it is difficult to obtain information about the semester system.

On items 4 and 7 principals who were in the schools one year prior had a significantly lower mean than principals who were not in the school one year prior. On items 23, 24 and 36 the reverse was true. These differences were significant at the .05 level.

Principals of partially semestered schools who were in the school one year prior differed significantly from principals who were not in the school one year prior to adoption on 6 of the 40 items. These items were:

- (4) a student achieves better academic results under the semester system,
- (15) the longer class period permits a subject to be studied in greater depth,
- (16) the longer class period makes for a more efficient use of class time in academic classes,
- (21) a teacher feels greater satisfaction when able to pursue a topic through a longer classroom period,
- (30) the semester system is more in line with your goals of education,
- (36) it is difficult to obtain information about the semester system.

On items 4, 15, 16, 21 and 30 principals who were in the school one year prior had significantly lower mean scores than principals who were not in the school one year prior to adoption. On item 36 the

reverse was true. These differences were significant at the .05 level.

However, although significant differences were found between principals who were in the schools one year prior to adoption of a complete or partial semester system and principals who were in the schools one year prior, there is a possibility that these differences may have occurred by chance.

III. SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to determine if there were any significant differences between the four categories of principals on their perceptions of the characteristics of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

With regard to research hypothesis one and the items dealing with the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school term the hypothesis was accepted for items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 while the null hypothesis was accepted for items 7, 8, 9, 10 and 24.

Research hypothesis two dealt with the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period. The hypothesis was accepted for items 12, 14, 15, 16, 32, 20, 21, 17, 18 and 19 while the null hypothesis was accepted for item 13.

Research hypothesis three dealt with perceived administrative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system. The hypothesis was accepted for items 11, 26, 28, 31, 25, 27 and 35 while the null hypothesis was accepted for items 22, 23 and 29.

Research hypothesis four was concerned with the compatibility of the semester system. The hypothesis was accepted for all these items,

namely, items 30, 33 and 34.

Research hypothesis five was concerned with the communicability of the semester system. No significant differences were found on any of the five items and therefore the null hypothesis was accepted for these items, namely, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40.

t-tests were employed to determine if there were significant differences between: (1) principals who claimed they had the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system and principals who claimed they did not have the final decision to adopt or reject the semester system, and (2) principals who were in the school one year prior to the adoption of either a complete or partial semester system and principals who were not in the school one year prior. With respect to the first of these, principals of conventional schools planning not to semester differed significantly on 7 of the 40 items, principals of conventional schools planning to semester differed on only 3 of the 40 items while principals of completely and partially semestered schools differed significantly on only 1 of the 40 items. On the second set of analyses principals of completely semestered schools who were in the schools one year prior to the adoption of the semester system were found to differ significantly from principals who were not in the school one year prior on 5 of the 40 items. Principals of partially semestered schools who were in the school one year prior differed significantly from those principals who were not on 6 of the 40 items.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter is a review of the study. This includes a statement of the problem investigated and a brief description of the instrumentation, the methodology and the sample. The chapter also reports the major findings and their possible implications.

I. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not there were significant differences between four categories of principals, namely, (1) principals whose schools are completely semestered, (2) principals whose schools are partially semestered, (3) principals planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system, and (4) principals planning not to semester on their perceptions of the characteristics of the semester system when compared with the conventional school year.

Analysis of the problem

Analysis of the problem began with a review of the literature in three areas: literature on the adoption process, literature on factors affecting perception and literature on methods of organizing the school year.

Writings on the adoption process were reviewed mainly to provide insight into the characteristics of innovations and the subsequent affect these characteristics have on the adoption process. A review of

the literature on the factors affecting perception was prompted by the idea that although the characteristics of an innovation may affect its adoption, it is in essence an individual's perception of these characteristics that seems of prime importance in the acceptance or rejection of an innovation. The literature dealing with the methods of organizing the school year was reviewed, primarily because this was thought to be basic to understanding the problem under study and secondly to provide the rationale for the development of the 40 item instrument used in assessing reactions to the semester system. As a result of this review of the literature five research hypotheses were formulated for testing.

Research hypotheses 1 to 3 postulated there would be significant differences between the four categories of principals and their perceptions of: (1) the relative advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school term under the semester system, (2) the relative advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period under the semester system, and (3) the relative administrative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year. Research hypothesis 4 postulated there would be a significant difference between the four categories of principals and their perception of how compatible the semester system is with their existing values and past experiences. Research hypothesis 5 postulated there would be a significant difference between the four categories of principals and their perception of the communicability, or ease by which one person may inform another about the semester system.

Instrumentation and Methodology

The main objective of this study was to determine if significant

differences existed between the four categories of principals and their perception of the characteristics of the semester system as compared to the conventional school year.

A four part questionnaire to be completed by Alberta principals was developed to serve as a common base for making comparisons between the four groups of principals. Part III of the questionnaire contained the 40 items on the characteristics of the semester system. Principals were asked to respond to these characteristics on the basis of a five point Likert scale. These responses are reported in Appendix B.

Part I of the questionnaire served to gather information about the personal and professional characteristics of the respondents. Part II was developed to obtain information from the principals about the characteristics of their school, its present organization and their future plans in regard to the method of organizing the school year. Part IV was developed to obtain information about the number of schools that the principal had visited to observe the semester system in operation, the number of administrators with whom principals discussed the semester system and the sources of information they had relied on most heavily in the decision to adopt or reject the semester system. Additional data that was collected in Part IV of the questionnaire appears in Appendix D.

The data were collected by mailing questionnaires to each principal selected to participate in the study. A stamped self-addressed envelope was enclosed. After the data collection the information was coded and transferred to I.B.M. cards. A One-Way Analysis of Variance test was run on each of the 40 items of the Likert scale to determine if there were any significant differences between the mean scores of

the four categories of principals. Where the assumption of homogeneity of variance for parametric statistics was violated, a nonparametric test, the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks was employed. An Analysis of Variance test was also employed to determine if there were significant differences between the four categories of principals on selected personal and professional variables.

The Sample

The sample for this study consisted of principals of public and separate secondary schools in the province of Alberta which contained all of grades ten, eleven and twelve; no respondents were selected from private or post-secondary institutions. Of the 246 questionnaires mailed to principals selected for the sample, 218 were returned; 214 of these questionnaires representing 87 per cent of all questionnaires mailed were usable and constituted the final sample.

II. REVIEW OF THE FINDINGS

Hypothesis 1

Significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of principals and their perceptions of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the shorter school term on 6 of the 11 items. Those items, where significant differences were found, were items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. The hypothesis was accepted with respect to these items whereas the null hypothesis was accepted for items 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Hypothesis 2

Significant differences were found between the mean scores of the

four categories of principals on their perception of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the longer classroom period on 10 of the 11 items. The items where significant differences were found were items 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 32, 18 and 19. The hypothesis was accepted for these items while the null hypothesis was accepted for item 13.

Hypothesis 3

Significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of principals on their perception of the relative administrative advantages and disadvantages of the semester system on 7 of the 10 items. The items where significant differences were found were items 11, 26, 28, 31, 25, 27 and 35. The hypothesis was accepted for these seven items whereas the null hypothesis was accepted for items 22, 23 and 29.

Hypothesis 4

Significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of the principals on their perception of the compatibility of the semester system on all the items concerned with compatibility. The hypothesis was accepted for all three items, namely, 30, 33, and 34.

Hypothesis 5

No significant differences were found between the mean scores of the four categories of principals and their perception of the communicability of the semester system. The hypothesis was not accepted; instead the null hypothesis was accepted for items 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40.

III. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions presented here were arrived at on the basis of evidence gathered through the analysis of the data contained in the usable Semester System Questionnaires. The evidence seems to suggest that the following is true with regard to the four categories of principals.

1. There are no significant differences between the four categories of principals on ten out of twelve selected personal and professional variables with the exception of: (1) the number of schools observed employing the semester system and (2) the number of administrators with whom principals discussed the semester system. In both cases principals of conventional schools planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system had a significantly higher mean than principals whose schools are completely or partially semestered. In regard to the number of administrators with whom principals discussed the semester system, principals of conventional schools planning not to semester had a significantly higher mean score than principals whose schools are completely semestered. To illustrate the importance of these two variables, it is interesting to note that principals of conventional schools planning not to semester ranked the advice of other principals (Table XXI) as the third most important source of information in rejecting the semester system. On the other hand, principals of conventional schools planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system ranked the advice of other principals (Table XXI) as their prime source of information in the decision to adopt the semester system. The other two categories of principals also ranked

the advice of other principals as their primary source of information. The observation of other schools employing the semester system was ranked by principals of conventional schools planning not to semester and principals of conventional schools planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system as the second most important source of information. Principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered ranked the observations of other schools as the third most important source of information.

2. An examination of the significant differences between the means of the four categories of principals on the 40 items dealing with the perceived characteristics of the semester system revealed that the most consistent differences between means occurred between principals of conventional schools planning not to semester and the other three categories of principals. As there seems to be no significant difference between the four categories of principals on selected personal and professional variables other than the number of schools observed and discussions of the semester system with other administrators, it would seem that these two variables may have been of some importance in the decision of principals to adopt or reject the semester system. It is possible that principals of conventional schools planning not to semester discussed the semester system with administrators who themselves were not in favour of the semester system whereas principals of conventional schools planning either complete or partial adoption of the semester system discussed the semester system with administrators who were proponents of this method of organizing the school year.

Another explanation for this discrepancy and perhaps a more

reasonable one is that a difference in perception between the four categories of principals exists. A review of the literature on the factors which cause differences in perception pointed out that perception is related to an individual's background, his interests, values and attitudes. Among factors which distort perception are listed: (1) characteristics of the perceiver, (2) situational influences, (3) selectivity and (4) the halo effect. This study found no significant differences between personal and professional variables with the exception of those two previously mentioned. Thus it would seem that the characteristics of the perceiver may not be a variable contributing to the discrepancy in perception in the present study. However, there is reason to believe that the situational influences and the halo effect did contribute to these differences. Principals who were working in and perhaps committed to the semester system on the average perceived only the advantages of the semester system whereas the principals who were apparently not committed and perhaps did not want to be committed to the semester system perceived only the disadvantages of the semester system.

In summary it would seem that the differences in perception on the majority of the characteristics of the semester system were due to situational influences, in particular, experience in a semester school, and the halo effect. Principals of conventional schools planning not to semester perceived the advantages and disadvantages of the semester system differently than did principals who were working in and perhaps committed to the semester system.

IV. IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study suggest some implications in respect to the adoption or rejection of the semester system in Alberta.

1. The differences in the perceptions of the four categories of principals on characteristics of the semester system may reflect that principals are adjusting their thoughts on the semester system to justify either their decision to accept or reject the semester system. That is, principals who are committed to the semester system perceived only its favourable aspects whereas principals who have not semestered and do not intend to semester perceived only the unfavourable aspects of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year.

2. Because principals whose schools are completely and partially semestered observed fewer schools employing the semester system and discussed the semester system with a significantly fewer number of administrators than did principals of conventional schools planning not to semester or principals of conventional schools planning either complete or partial semester system, it may be possible that they did not give due consideration to semestering before adopting the semester system.

3. The finding that principals differed significantly on 65 per cent of the 40 characteristics of the semester system suggests that there is controversy with respect to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the conventional school year. Thus one might expect that total disappearance of the conventional school year in favor of some form of divided school year will not occur in the immediate future.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. It would seem that as there is such a discrepancy between the categories of principals in their perception of the characteristics of the semester system and in particular between principals of conventional schools planning not to semester and principals in the other three categories that further study on those items where significant differences were found would seem warranted. Such a study might determine if these differences are simply a matter of perception or are founded on actual differences.

2. Two groups of individuals which are affected by the implementation or lack of implementation of the semester system are the students and the teachers. It would seem that research in these areas would be justifiable to determine their reactions to the semester system on these same characteristics.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

12

Department of Educational
Administration,
University of Alberta,
Edmonton, Alberta.

February 28, 1969.

Dear Sir or Madam:

As part of my graduate studies program in Educational Administration at the University of Alberta I am conducting a survey of all secondary school principals in the Province of Alberta. The purpose of this survey is to determine why the semester system is being adopted by Alberta principals. Secondary principals are being asked to compare characteristics of the semester system with those of the conventional ten month school year. The questionnaire is being answered by three groups of principals, namely, those who have adopted the semester system, those who are planning to adopt the semester system and those who are not at present planning to adopt the semester system. All individual replies will be held in the strictest confidence. Anonymity is assured.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed envelope. Your immediate response would be appreciated. Thank you for your co-operation .

Yours truly,

John E. Arnot
John E. Arnot

Code number: _____

PART I: PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Sex: (Check one)

- _____ Male
_____ Female

2. Age: (Check one)

- _____ 24 years and under _____ 45-49 years
_____ 25-29 years _____ 50-54 years
_____ 30-34 years _____ 55-59 years
_____ 35-39 years _____ 60 years and over
_____ 40-44 years

3. For how many years of teacher education are you paid? (Check one)

- _____ Less than two years.
_____ Two years or more but less than three years.
_____ Three years or more but less than four years.
_____ Four years or more but less than five years.
_____ Five years or more but less than six years.
_____ Six years or more.

4. What is the highest degree you hold? (Check one)

- _____ None
_____ B. Ed. only
_____ Other bachelor's degree
_____ Two or more bachelor's degrees
_____ Bachelor's degree and Graduate Diploma
_____ M. Ed.
_____ Other Master's degree(s)
_____ Ed. D. or Ph.D.
_____ Other: (specify) _____

5. When was your most recent formal education (e.g., full-time winter-session attendance at university, summer school, evening credit classes, principal's leadership course or similar credit or non-credit courses)? (Check one)

- _____ Within the past year
_____ One to three years ago
_____ Four to six years ago
_____ Seven to nine years ago
_____ Ten or more years ago

6. How much graduate work have you completed in Educational Administration? (Check one)

- _____ No graduate university courses in Educational Administration.
_____ Some graduate university courses in Educational Administration.
_____ Hold a graduate degree in Educational Administration.

7. How many years of experience as principal have you had in your present school? (Include this year)

8. What is your total number of years of experience as

9. Were you on staff in this school (as a teacher, vice-principal, etc.) immediately prior to being appointed principal? (Check one)

- Yes _____
No _____

10. In how many different schools since starting to teach have you served as teacher, vice-principal, principal, etc?

11. To which A.T.A. Specialist Council(s) do you belong?

- _____ (a) Business Education Council
_____ (b) English Council
_____ (c) Fine Arts Council
_____ (d) Guidance Council
_____ (e) Health and Physical Education Council
_____ (f) Home Economics Council
_____ (g) Industrial Arts and Educational Education
_____ (h) Mathematics Council
_____ (i) Modern and Classical Language Council
_____ (j) Council on School Administration
_____ (k) School Library Council
_____ (l) Science Council
_____ (m) Social Studies Council
_____ (n) Other: (Specify) _____

12. To which educational organizations do you belong? Leave out the A.T.A. and its councils and the C.T.F. Add the names of those that do not appear on the list but to which you belong.

- _____ (a) None, except as indicated in question number 11.
_____ (b) Phi Delta Kappa
_____ (c) American Educational Research Association
_____ (d) Canadian College of Teachers
_____ (e) _____
_____ (f) _____
_____ (g) _____

13. How many professional (education) journals do you read regularly? (Check one)

- _____ (a) Read no professional journal regularly.
_____ (b) Read one professional journal regularly.
_____ (c) Read two professional journals regularly.
_____ (d) Read three professional journals regularly.
_____ (e) Read four professional journals regularly.
_____ (f) Read five or more professional journals regularly.

PART II: SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Which grades are included in your school? Check the response which most clearly describes your school.

- _____ Grades 1 to 12
_____ Grades 7 to 12
_____ Grades 10 to 12
_____ Other: (specify) _____

PART III: PRINCIPAL'S PERCEPTION OF SEMESTER SYSTEM
CHARACTERISTICS

Instructions:

A. Consider how each statement below describes your perception of the semester system as compared with the non-semester system.

B. Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each statement as follows:

Circle (AS) if you agree strongly

Circle (A) if you agree

Circle (U) if you are undecided

Circle (D) if you disagree

Circle (DS) if you disagree strongly

2. How many full-time high school teachers are there in your high school? Include administrative personnel, counsellors, teacher-librarians, etc. _____
3. How many full-time high school students are enrolled in your school? (Grades X - XII). _____
4. How many part-time students (high school or adult) are enrolled in your school? (Grades X - XII). _____
5. Is your high school (Check one)
 - (a) fully semestered? _____
 - (b) partially semestered? _____
 - (c) non-semestered? _____
6. If your high school is fully semestered which do you plan on doing in the fall of 1969? (Check one)
 - (a) Retaining the present system. _____
 - (b) Reverting to a partially semestered program. _____
 - (c) Reverting to a non-semestered program. _____
 - (d) Other: (Specify) _____
7. If your high school is partially semestered which do you plan on doing in the fall of 1969? (Check one)
 - (a) Retaining the present system. _____
 - (b) Adopting a fully semestered program. _____
 - (c) Reverting to a non-semestered program. _____
 - (d) Other: (Specify) _____
8. If your high school is non-semestered which do you plan on doing in the fall of 1969? (Check one)
 - (a) Retaining the present system. _____
 - (b) Adopting a partially semestered program. _____
 - (c) Adopting a fully semestered program. _____
 - (d) Other: (Specify) _____
9. As principal did you have the final decision as to whether you may or may not adopt the semester system in your school? (Check One)

Yes _____

No _____

You may wish to qualify your answer. If so, please use the space provided.

10. If your answer to question #9 was (no) rank the following according to the degree of importance you feel they had in the decision to adopt or not adopt the semester system in your school. (1 - most important; 2 - next most important, etc.)
 - _____ (a) Superintendent
 - _____ (b) School Board
 - _____ (c) Superintendent and School Board
 - _____ (d) School Staff
 - _____ (e) Other: (Specify) _____

1. The short school term (e.g., September - January) under the semester system increases student motivation. AS A U D DS
2. The short school term (e.g., September - January) under the semester system results in more effective work habits by the student. AS A U D DS
3. Presenting a student with a full course during a semester leads to superficiality in learning. AS A U D DS
4. A student achieves better academic results under the semester system. AS A U D DS
5. A student who has taken a subject in the first semester (September - January) without a sequential follow-up in the second semester (February-June) forgets more course work by the following September. AS A U D DS
6. Fewer courses over a shorter period of time (September - January) increases the stress under which a student must work. AS A U D DS
7. The semester system permits the high school student to complete his program without remaining in school for a full year. AS A U D DS
8. The semester system permits adult students to finish their high school program without remaining in school a full year. AS A U D DS
9. The semester system allows the student to repeat a course within the same academic year. AS A U D DS
10. The semester system enables the student to shift from one program to another (e.g., academic-vocational) at the semester break. AS A U D DS
11. Under the semester system there is a greater variety in curriculum offering. AS A U D DS
12. Longer class periods under the semester system allows for the use of a greater variety of instructional materials. AS A U D DS
13. The semester system increases the time a teacher must spend in preparing lessons due to longer periods. AS A U D DS
14. The semester system encourages more effective teaching as the teacher is required to plan for different types of activity within larger blocks of time. AS A U D DS

- | | | | |
|--|-------------|--|-------------|
| 15. The longer class period under the semester system permits a school subject to be studied in greater depth. | AS A U D DS | 34. The semester system is readily accepted by students. | AS A U D DS |
| 16. The longer class period under the semester system makes for a more efficient use of class time in academic (non-laboratory) classes. | AS A U D DS | 35. It is difficult for an administrator to adopt only a partially semestered program. | AS A U D DS |
| 17. The longer class period under the semester system makes for easier scheduling of laboratory classes (e.g., chemistry labs, art, vocational electives). | AS A U D DS | 36. Do you feel it would be difficult to obtain information about the semester system? | AS A U D DS |
| 18. Under the semester system the experienced teacher finds it difficult to adjust to the longer classroom period. | AS A U D DS | 37. Do you feel it is difficult to understand the semester system. | AS A U D DS |
| 19. Under the semester system the student finds it difficult to adjust to the increased length of the classroom period. | AS A U D DS | 38. Do you feel it would be difficult to explain the semester system to new students in your school? | AS A U D DS |
| 20. Under the semester system a student feels greater satisfaction when able to pursue a topic through a longer period of class time. | AS A U D DS | 39. Do you feel it would be difficult to explain the semester system to new teachers in your school? | AS A U D DS |
| 21. Under the semester system a teacher feels greater satisfaction when able to pursue a topic through a longer period of class time. | AS A U D DS | 40. Do you feel it would be difficult to explain the semester system to other administrative personnel. | AS A U D DS |
| 22. Under the semester system an additional burden is placed on the administration by requiring two registrations per year. | AS A U D DS | 41. Do you perceive further advantages or disadvantages of the semester system as compared with the non-semester system? If you do, please list these below. | |
| 23. Under the semester system an additional burden is placed on the principal and his staff (teachers, etc.) by requiring the setting, marking and recording of two sets of final examinations. | AS A U D DS | A. Advantages of the semester system over the non-semester system. | |
| 24. Students who are required to transfer to other schools (e.g., from a semestered to a non-semestered school) during the school year are difficult to accommodate into the other school's program. | AS A U D DS | 1. | |
| 25. Supervision of teachers becomes more of a problem under the semester system. | AS A U D DS | 2. | |
| 26. The semester system allows for a more effective placement of staff in subject areas in which they are competent. | AS A U D DS | 3. | |
| 27. Scheduling of an individual student program is more difficult under the semester system. | AS A U D DS | 4. | |
| 28. The semester system allows for a more effective placement of students in programs of their choice. | AS A U D DS | 5. | |
| 29. The semester system increases the over-all administrative problems within the school. | AS A U D DS | B. Disadvantages of the semester system over the non-semester system. | |
| 30. The semester system is more in line with what you feel to be the goals of education. | AS A U D DS | 1. | |
| 31. The semester system results in a more effective utilization of school facilities (e.g., labs, gymnasias, libraries, etc.) | AS A U D DS | 2. | |
| 32. The semester system results in a more effective utilization of community resources through the use of class visitations, field trips, etc. | AS A U D DS | 3. | |
| 33. The semester system is readily accepted by teachers | -- | 4. | |
| | | 5. | |

SECTION A

- (a) TO BE ANSWERED BY PRINCIPALS WHOSE SCHOOLS ARE PRESENTLY NON-SEMESTERED AND WHO DO NOT PLAN ON EITHER PARTIALLY OR FULLY SEMESTERING IN THE FALL OF 1969.
- (b) If your school is non-semestered but you plan on either partially or fully semestering in the fall of 1969 please turn to Section B on page 5.
- (c) If your school is presently either partially or fully semestered please turn to Section C on page 6.
- Have you as principal ever considered adopting either a partially or fully semestered program in your school? (Check one)

Yes ☐ No ☐
 - How many schools have you visited to observe the semester system in operation? (Check one)

☐ none ☐ three
☐ one ☐ four or more
☐ two
 - With how many administrators (principals, superintendents, etc.) have you discussed the semester system?

☐ none ☐ two ☐ four or more
☐ one ☐ three
 - Which three of the following sources of information did you rely on most heavily in the decision not to adopt the semester system in your school? Please number 1, 2 and 3 in order of importance. (e.g., 1 - most important, etc.)

☐ (a) Observations of other schools employing the semester system.
☐ (b) Advice of other principals.
☐ (c) Information disseminated by professional organizations (e.g., A.T.A., C.S.A., A.S.T.A.).
☐ (d) Information presented at professional meetings (e.g., A.T.A. Local meetings, C.S.A. meetings, teacher conventions).
☐ (e) Superintendent(s)
☐ (f) District, Division or County central office personnel (e.g., consultants, supervisors).
☐ (g) Teachers
☐ (h) Professional journals.
☐ (i) Department of Education materials.
☐ (j) School board members.
☐ (k) Other sources: (Specify) _____
 - Have you consulted your staff concerning their opinion of the advantages and disadvantages of the semester system for your school? (Check one)

Yes ☐ No ☐
 - If your answer to question #15 was no, why did you not consult your staff?

- If your answer to question #15 was yes, why did you consult your staff?

- Have you consulted the students concerning their opinion of the advantages and disadvantages of the semester system for your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐
- If your answer to question #8 was no, why did you not consult the students?

- If your answer to question #8 was yes, why did you consult the students?

- Have you consulted the parents and others in the community concerning their opinion of the advantages and disadvantages of the semester system for your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐
- If your answer to question #11 was no, why did you not consult the parents and others in the community?

- If your answer to question #11 was yes, why did you consult the parents and others in the community?

- Please list in order of importance the position (e.g., principal, superintendent) of those people whom you feel were most influential in the decision not to adopt the semester system?

Position

- _____
- _____
- _____

- You may wish to make further comments concerning the semester system in relation to the above questions or your school. If so, please do so here.

You have completed the questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire in the stamped, self-addressed envelope. Thank you for your cooperation.

SECTION B

TO BE ANSWERED BY PRINCIPALS WHOSE SCHOOLS ARE PRESENTLY NON-SEMESTERED BUT WILL BECOME EITHER PARTIALLY OR FULLY SEMESTERED IN THE FALL OF 1969.

1. How many schools did you visit to observe the semester system in operation prior to the decision to adopt the semester system in your school? (Check one)

____ None ____ Three
 ____ One ____ Four or more
 ____ Two

2. With how many administrators (principals, superintendents, etc.) did you discuss the semester system prior to the decision to this system in your school? Include correspondence. (Check one)

____ None ____ Three
 ____ One ____ Four or more
 ____ Two

3. Which three of the following sources of information did you rely on most heavily in deciding to adopt the semester system in your school? Please number them 1, 2 and 3 in order of importance. (e.g., 1 - most important, etc.)

- ____ (a) Observations of other schools employing the semester system.
 ____ (b) Advice of other principals.
 ____ (c) Information disseminated by professional organizations (e.g., A.T.A., C.S.A., A.S.T.A.)
 ____ (d) Information presented at professional meetings (e.g., A.T.A. local meetings, C.S.A. meetings, teacher conventions)
 ____ (e) Superintendent(s)
 ____ (f) District, division or county central office personnel (e.g. consultants, supervisors).
 ____ (g) Teachers
 ____ (h) Professional journals.
 ____ (i) Department of Education materials.
 ____ (j) School board members
 ____ (k) Other sources: (specify) _____

4. Did you consult your staff for their opinion of the semester system prior to the decision to adopt the semester system in your school? (Check one)

Yes ____
 No ____

5. If your answer to question #4 was no, why did you not consult your staff?

6. If your answer to question #4 was yes, why did you consult your staff?

7. Did you consult the students for their opinion of the semester system prior to the decision to adopt the semester system in your school?

Yes ____
 No ____

8. If your answer to question #7 was no, why did you not consult the students?

9. If your answer to question #7 was yes, why did you consult the students?

10. Did you consult the parents and others in the community prior to the decision to adopt the semester system in your school?

Yes ____
 No ____

11. If your answer to question #10 was no, why did you not consult the parents and others in the community?

12. If your answer to question #10 was yes, why did you consult the parents and others in the community?

13. Please list in order of importance the position (e.g., principal, superintendent) of those people whom you feel were most influential in the decision to adopt the semester system?

Position

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

14. You may wish to make further comments concerning the semester system in relation to the above questions or your school. If so, please do so here.

You have completed the questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire in the stamped, self-addressed envelope. Thank you for your cooperation.

SECTION C:

TO BE ANSWERED BY PRINCIPALS WHOSE SCHOOLS ARE PRESENTLY
EITHER PARTIALLY OR FULLY SEMESTERED.

1. In what year was the semester system adopted in your school? _____

2. Were you principal in the year prior to the adoption of the semester system in your present school?

Yes _____

No _____

NOTE: (i) If your answer to question #2 was no, you have completed the questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire in the stamped, self-addressed envelope. Thank you for your cooperation.

(ii) If your answer to question #2 was yes would you please answer the remaining questions.

3. How many schools did you visit to observe the semester system in operation prior to adopting the semester system in your school? (Check one)

_____ None _____ Three

_____ One _____ Four or more

_____ Two

4. With how many administrators (principals, superintendents, etc.) did you discuss the semester system prior to adopting this system in your school? (Check one)

_____ None _____ Three

_____ One _____ Four or more

_____ Two

5. Which three of the following sources of information did you rely on most heavily in deciding to adopt the semester system in your school? (e.g., 1 - most important, etc.)

_____ (a) Observations of other schools employing the semester system.

_____ (b) Advice of other principals.

_____ (c) Information disseminated by professional organizations (e.g., A.T.A., C.S.A., A.S.T.A.).

_____ (d) Information presented at professional meetings (e.g., A.T.A. local meetings, C.S.A. meetings, teacher conventions).

_____ (e) Superintendent (s).

_____ (f) District, division or county central office personnel (e.g., consultants, supervisors).

_____ (g) Teachers

_____ (h) Professional journals.

_____ (i) Department of Education materials

_____ (j) School Board members

_____ (k) Other sources (specify)

6. Did you consult your staff for their opinion of the semester system prior to the decision to adopt this system in your school? (Check one)

Yes _____

No _____

7. If your answer to question #6 was no, why did you not consult your staff?

8. If your answer to question #6 was yes, why did you consult your staff?

9. Did you consult the students for their opinion of the semester system prior to the decision to adopt this system in your school?

Yes _____

No _____

10. If your answer to question #9 was no, why did you not consult the students?

11. If your answer to question #9 was yes, why did you consult the students?

12. Did you consult the parents and others in the community prior to the decision to adopt this system in your school?

Yes _____

No _____

13. If your answer to question #12 was no, why did you not consult the parents and others in the community?

14. If your answer to question #12 was yes, why did you consult the parents and others in the community?

15. Please list in order of importance the position (e.g., principal, superintendent) of the persons whom you feel were most influential in the decision to adopt the semester system?

Position

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

16. You may wish to make further comments concerning the semester system in relation to the above questions or your school. If so, please do so here.

You have completed the questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire in the stamped, self-addressed envelope. Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX B

Item #1: The short school term under the semester system increases student motivation

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	7	12	9	2
	%		23.3	40.0	30.0	6.7
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	8	15	5
	%			28.6	53.6	17.9
Partially semestered schools	N	1	3	16	45	14
	%	1.3	3.8	20.3	57.0	17.7
Completely semestered schools	N	0	4	7	48	17
	%		5.2	9.1	63.6	22.1

Item #2: The short school term under the semester system results in more effective work habits by the student

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	2	10	12	4	2
	%	6.7	33.3	40.0	13.3	6.7
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	16	9	3
	%			57.1	32.1	10.7
Partially semestered schools	N	1	8	24	39	7
	%	1.3	10.1	30.4	49.4	8.9
Completely semestered schools	N	0	7	15	44	11
	%		9.1	19.5	57.1	14.3

Item #3: Presenting student with a full course during a semester leads to superficiality in learning

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	5	11	9	5	0
	%	16.7	36.7	30.0	16.7	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	3	7	15	3
	%		10.7	25.0	53.6	10.7
Partially semestered schools	N	4	12	24	34	5
	%	5.1	15.2	30.4	43.0	6.3
Completely semestered schools	N	0	3	12	51	11
	%		3.9	15.6	66.2	14.3

Item #4: A student achieves better academic results under the semester system.

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	10	15	4	0
	%	3.3	33.3	50.0	13.3	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	1	17	10	0
	%		3.6	60.7	35.7	
Partially semestered schools	N	2	7	38	25	7
	%	2.5	8.9	48.1	31.6	8.9
Completely semestered schools	N	0	7	23	33	14
	%		9.1	29.9	42.9	18.2

Item #5: A student who has taken a subject in the first semester without a sequential follow-up in the second semester forgets more course work by the following September

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	4	18	7	1	0
	%	13.3	60.0	23.3	3.3	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	1	7	12	8	0
	%	3.6	25.0	42.9	28.6	
Partially semestered schools	N	5	17	36	20	1
	%	6.3	21.5	45.6	25.3	1.3
Completely semestered schools	N	3	14	32	23	5
	%	3.9	18.2	41.6	29.9	6.5

Item #6: Fewer courses over a shorter period of time increases the stress under which a student must work

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	2	12	10	5	1
	%	6.7	40.0	33.3	16.7	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	2	7	4	14	1
	%	7.1	25.0	14.3	50.0	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	3	13	13	43	7
	%	3.8	16.5	16.5	54.4	8.9
Completely semestered schools	N	2	10	9	47	9
	%	2.6	13.0	11.7	61.0	11.7

Item #7: The semester system permits the high school student to complete his program without remaining in school for a full year.

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	4	1	17	8
	%		13.3	3.3	56.7	26.7
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	1	16	11
	%			3.6	57.1	39.3
Partially semestered schools	N	0	5	1	45	28
	%		6.3	1.3	57.0	35.4
Completely semestered schools	N	0	5	1	36	35
	%		6.5	1.3	46.8	45.5

Item #8: The semester system permits adult students to finish their high school program without remaining in school a full year

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	2	3	16	9
	%		6.7	10.0	53.3	30.0
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	0	15	13
	%				53.6	46.4
Partially semestered schools	N	0	1	4	41	33
	%		1.3	5.1	51.9	41.8
Completely semestered schools	N	0	2	3	36	36
	%		2.6	3.9	46.8	46.8

Item #9: The semester system allows the student to repeat a course within the same academic year

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	6	3	16	5
	%		20.0	10.0	53.3	16.7
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	2	2	17	7
	%		7.1	7.1	60.7	25.0
Partially semestered schools	N	1	8	7	46	17
	%	1.3	10.1	8.9	58.2	21.5
Completely semestered schools	N	0	5	2	53	17
	%		6.5	2.6	68.8	22.1

Item #10: The semester system enables the student to shift from one program to another at the semester break

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	2	10	14	4
	%		6.7	33.3	46.7	13.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	2	6	14	6
	%		7.1	21.4	50.0	21.4
Partially semestered schools	N	0	4	11	46	18
	%		5.1	13.9	58.2	22.8
Completely semestered schools	N	0	3	5	51	18
	%		3.9	6.5	66.2	23.4

Item #11: Under the semester system there is a greater variety in curriculum offering

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	4	14	9	2	1
	%	13.3	46.7	30.0	6.7	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	10	9	8	1
	%		35.7	32.1	28.6	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	3	27	14	29	6
	%	3.8	34.2	17.7	36.7	7.6
Completely semestered schools	N	1	21	14	31	10
	%	1.3	27.3	18.2	40.3	13.0

Item #12: Longer class periods under the semester system allows for the use of a greater variety of instructional materials

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	7	8	11	3
	%	3.3	23.3	26.7	36.7	10.0
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	1	2	16	9
	%		3.6	7.1	57.1	32.1
Partially semestered schools	N	0	5	6	46	22
	%		6.3	7.6	58.2	27.8
Completely semestered schools	N	0	2	1	42	32
	%		2.6	1.3	54.5	41.6

Item # 13: The semester system increases the time a teacher must spend in preparing lessons due to longer periods

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	2	16	6	5	11
	%	6.7	53.3	20.0	16.7	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	7	13	2	5	1
	%	25.0	46.4	7.1	17.9	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	17	35	8	16	3
	%	21.5	44.3	10.1	20.3	3.8
Completely semestered schools	N	14	31	5	25	2
	%	18.2	40.3	6.5	32.5	2.6

Item #14: The semester system encourages more effective teaching as the teacher is required to plan for different types of activity within larger blocks of time

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	5	13	12	0
	%		16.7	43.3	40.0	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	5	18	5
	%			17.9	64.3	17.9
Partially semestered schools	N	0	3	8	46	22
	%		3.8	10.1	58.2	27.8
Completely semestered schools	N	0	2	9	47	19
	%		2.6	11.7	61.0	24.7

Item #15: The longer class period under the semester system permits a school subject to be studied in greater depth

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	2	13	10	5	0
	%	6.7	43.3	33.3	16.7	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	3	10	12	3
	%		10.7	35.7	42.9	10.7
Partially semestered schools	N	2	15	19	30	12
	%	2.6	19.2	24.4	38.5	15.4
Completely semestered schools	N	0	13	17	38	9
	%		16.9	22.1	49.4	11.7

Item #16: The longer class period under the semester system makes for a more efficient use of class time in academic classes

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional school not intending to semester	N	2	13	10	3	2
	%	6.7	43.3	33.3	10.0	6.7
Conventional school intending to semester	N	1	2	18	6	1
	%	3.6	7.1	64.3	21.4	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	2	9	27	33	8
	%	2.5	11.4	34.2	41.8	10.1
Completely semestered schools	N	0	5	15	46	11
	%		6.5	19.5	59.7	14.3

Item #17: The longer class period under the semester system makes for easier scheduling of laboratory classes

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	5	5	17	3
	%		16.7	16.7	56.7	10.0
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	1	3	17	7
	%		3.6	10.7	60.7	25.0
Partially semestered schools	N	0	7	9	44	19
	%		8.9	11.4	55.7	24.1
Completely semestered schools	N	0	3	6	44	24
	%		3.9	7.8	57.1	31.2

Item #18: Under the semester system the experienced teacher finds it difficult to adjust to the longer classroom period

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	3	7	11	8	1
	%	10.0	23.3	36.7	26.7	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	7	11	9	1
	%		25.0	39.3	32.1	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	0	9	11	48	11
	%		11.4	13.9	60.8	13.9
Completely semestered schools	N	0	10	5	43	19
	%		13.0	6.5	55.8	24.7

Item #19: Under the semester system the student finds it difficult to adjust to the increased length of the classroom period

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	13	11	5	0
	%	3.3	43.3	36.7	16.7	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N		9	12	6	1
	%		32.1	42.9	21.4	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	1	13	16	45	4
	%	1.3	16.5	20.3	57.0	5.1
Completely semestered schools	N	1	8	8	49	11
	%	1.3	10.4	10.4	63.6	14.3

Item #20: Under the semester system a student feels greater satisfaction when able to pursue a topic through a longer period of class time

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	9	17	3	1
	%		30.0	56.7	10.0	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	1	12	13	2
	%		3.6	42.9	46.4	7.1
Partially semestered schools	N	0	5	27	44	3
	%		6.3	34.2	55.7	3.8
Completely semestered schools	N	0	4	18	51	4
	%		5.2	23.4	66.2	5.2

Item #21: Under the semester system a teacher feels greater satisfaction when able to pursue a topic through a longer period of class time

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	10	12	6	1
	%	3.3	33.3	40.0	20.0	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	11	15	2
	%			39.3	53.6	7.1
Partially semestered schools	N	0	6	24	43	6
	%		7.6	30.4	54.4	7.6
Completely semestered schools	N	1	3	10	51	12
	%	1.3	3.9	13.0	66.2	15.6

Item #22: Under the semester system an additional burden is placed on the administration by requiring two registrations per year

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	5	20	3	2	0
	%	16.7	66.7	10.0	6.7	
Conventional schools intending	N	3	21	2	1	1
	%	10.7	75.0	7.1	3.6	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	14	46	6	13	0
	%	17.7	58.2	7.6	16.5	
Completely semestered schools	N	14	42	2	16	3
	%	18.2	54.5	2.6	20.8	3.9

Item #23: Under the semester system an additional burden is placed on the principal and his staff by requiring the setting, marking and recording of two sets of final examinations

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	5	14	5	6	0
	%	16.7	46.7	16.7	20.0	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	2	13	5	7	1
	%	7.1	46.4	17.9	25.0	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	8	38	7	26	0
	%	10.1	48.1	8.9	32.9	
Completely semestered schools	N	7	32	7	29	2
	%	9.1	41.6	9.1	37.7	2.6

Item #24: Students who are required to transfer to other schools during the school year are difficult to accommodate into the other school's program

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	18	9	3	0	0
	%	60.0	30.0	10.0		
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	7	18	2	1	0
	%	25.0	64.3	7.1	3.6	
Partially semestered schools	N	24	47	6	2	0
	%	30.4	59.5	7.6	2.5	
Completely semestered schools	N	22	47	6	1	1
	%	28.6	61.0	7.8	1.3	1.3

Item #25: Supervision of teachers becomes more of a problem under the semester system

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	5	15	8	2
	%		16.7	50.0	26.7	6.7
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	12	15	1
	%			42.9	53.6	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	4	6	19	46	4
	%	5.1	7.6	24.1	58.2	5.1
Completely semestered schools	N	1	8	8	47	13
	%	1.3	10.4	10.4	61.0	16.9

Item #26: The semester system allows for a more effective placement of staff in subject areas in which they are competent

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	10	11	5	3
	%	3.3	33.3	36.7	16.7	10.0
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	4	12	10	2
	%		14.3	42.9	35.7	7.1
Partially semestered schools	N	1	13	21	36	8
	%	1.3	16.5	26.6	45.6	10.1
Completely semestered schools	N	0	8	10	48	11
	%		10.4	13.0	62.3	14.3

Item #27: Scheduling of an individual student program is more difficult under the semester system

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	7	14	8	0
	%	3.3	23.3	46.7	26.7	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	1	12	12	3
	%		3.6	42.9	42.9	10.7
Partially semestered schools	N	2	14	13	41	9
	%	2.5	17.7	16.5	51.9	11.4
Completely semestered schools	N	0	6	5	56	10
	%		7.8	6.5	72.7	13.0

Item #28: The semester system allows for a more effective placement of students in programs of their choice

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	12	11	6	0
	%	3.3	40.0	36.7	20.0	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	3	11	13	1
	%		10.7	39.3	46.4	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	2	17	13	38	9
	%	2.5	21.5	16.5	48.1	11.4
Completely semestered schools	N	0	8	12	50	7
	%		10.4	15.6	64.9	9.1

Item #29: The semester system increases the over-all administrative problems in the school

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	11	17	0	1
	%	3.3	36.7	56.7		3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	2	7	14	4	1
	%	7.1	25.0	50.0	14.3	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	1	30	17	29	2
	%	1.3	38.0	21.5	36.7	2.5
Completely semestered schools	N	3	28	11	33	2
	%	3.9	36.4	14.3	42.9	2.6

Item #30: The semester system is more in line with what you feel to be the goals of education

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	7	10	9	4	0
	%	23.3	33.3	30.0	13.3	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	6	12	8	2
	%		21.4	42.9	28.6	7.1
Partially semestered schools	N	4	11	31	25	8
	%	5.1	13.9	39.2	31.6	10.1
Completely semestered schools	N	0	5	23	42	7
	%		6.5	29.9	54.5	9.1

Item #31: The semester system results in a more effective utilization of school facilities

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	3	10	10	6	1
	%	10.0	33.3	33.3	20.0	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	3	7	15	3
	%		10.7	25.0	53.6	10.7
Partially semestered schools	N	2	12	11	47	7
	%	2.5	15.2	13.9	59.5	8.9
Completely semestered schools	N	0	2	9	53	13
	%		2.6	11.7	68.8	16.9

Item #32: The semester system results in a more effective utilization of community resources

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	4	4	12	10	0
	%	13.3	13.3	40.0	33.3	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	3	9	14	2
	%		10.7	32.1	50.0	7.1
Partially semestered schools	N	0	15	23	34	7
	%		19.0	29.1	43.0	8.9
Completely semestered schools	N	0	6	17	43	11
	%		7.8	22.1	55.8	14.3

Item #33: The semester system is readily accepted by teachers

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	3	9	12	6	0
	%	10.0	30.0	40.0	20.0	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	7	14	6	1
	%		25.0	50.0	21.4	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	1	12	17	45	4
	%	1.3	15.2	21.5	57.0	5.1
Completely semestered schools	N	0	4	5	55	13
	%		5.2	6.5	71.4	16.9

Item #34: The semester system is readily accepted by students

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	2	15	13	0
	%		6.7	50.0	43.3	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	1	7	16	4
	%		3.6	25.0	57.1	14.3
Partially semestered schools	N	0	2	14	46	17
	%		2.5	17.7	58.2	21.5
Completely semestered schools	N	2	1	2	48	24
	%	2.6	1.3	2.6	62.3	41.2

Item #35: It is difficult for an administrator to adopt only a partially semestered program

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	2	10	8	9	1
	%	6.7	33.3	26.7	30.0	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	2	7	7	12	0
	%	7.1	25.0	25.0	42.9	
Partially semestered schools	N	2	14	1	50	12
	%	2.5	17.7	1.3	63.3	15.2
Completely semestered schools	N	12	25	17	23	0
	%	15.6	32.5	22.1	29.9	

Item #36: Do you feel it would be difficult to obtain information about the semester system?

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	1	6	4	18	1
	%	3.3	20.0	13.3	60.0	3.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	1	5	2	19	1
	%	3.6	17.9	7.1	67.9	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	4	11	9	53	2
	%	5.1	13.9	11.4	67.1	2.5
Completely semestered schools	N	1	14	9	47	6
	%	1.3	18.2	11.7	61.0	7.8

Item #37: Do you feel it is difficult to understand the semester system?

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	0	2	24	4
	%			6.7	80.0	13.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	2	24	2
	%			7.1	85.7	7.1
Partially semestered schools	N	2	0	4	63	10
	%	2.5		5.1	79.7	12.7
Completely semestered schools	N	0	1	1	58	17
	%		1.3	1.3	75.3	22.1

Item #38: Do you feel it would be difficult to explain the semester system to new students in your school?

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	0	1	25	4
	%			33.3	83.3	13.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	2	24	2
	%			7.1	85.7	7.1
Partially semestered schools	N	0	1	2	67	9
	%		1.3	2.5	84.8	11.4
Completely semestered schools	N	0	0	1	61	15
	%			1.3	79.2	19.5

Item #39: Do you feel it would be difficult to explain the semester system to new teachers in your school?

Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	0	1	25	4
	%			3.3	83.3	13.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	1	25	2
	%			3.6	89.3	7.1
Partially semestered schools	N	1	0	2	67	9
	%	1.3		2.5	84.8	11.4
Completely semestered schools	N	0	0	0	61	16
	%				79.2	20.8

Item #40: Do you feel it would be difficult to explain the semester system to other administrative personnel:

		AS	A	U	D	DS
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	0	0	0	26	4
	%				86.7	13.3
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	0	0	2	25	1
	%			7.1	89.3	3.6
Partially semestered schools	N	0	1	4	63	11
	%		1.3	5.1	79.7	13.9
Completely semestered schools	N	0	0	0	61	16
	%				79.2	20.8

APPENDIX C

Further Perceived Advantages of the Semester System

1. Poorer teachers can be discovered and eliminated in five months rather than ten months (3)^{*}
2. Teachers are in contact with fewer students and they get to know them better (6).
3. Less time is wasted as there are fewer class changes (11).
4. The student has the opportunity to work on assignments under the teacher's supervision.
5. There is a new and exciting air of novelty(2).
6. Students may take sequential courses in the same year.
7. Attendance procedures are less tedious.
8. Two schools having different facilities and staff could operate, partially, as one campus (3).
9. Allows for the abolishment of spare periods.
10. There is the possibility of earlier program completion (11).
11. There is earlier entry to the work force (2).
12. Scheduling of examinations is easier as they can be scheduled during class time (2).
13. Changing classes every five months is a psychological and sociological uplift for teachers and students (5).
14. The semester system allows for more individual attention (6).
15. The students are in favour of the semester system and this acts as a built in motivator (4).
16. The semester system is better for students who tend to drop out due to the ten month period (2).
17. The small school can offer more courses over three years.
18. The semester system improves student attendance.
19. The semester system decreases discipline problems (2).

*

The number in the parenthesis indicates the number of times this advantage was cited by the four categories of principals.

Further Perceived Disadvantages of the Semester System

1. There is little research that semestering is superior (2)*.
2. Some courses (French, typing) seem to require longer introductory work (10).
3. The semester system fails to increase flexibility in the small high school (5).
4. Problem of fatigue in courses like typing and oral French.
5. Student and teacher absenteeism means the student loses twice as much time (35).
6. As education is a growth and not a forced entity, the student must have time to ripen (8).
7. There is a disruption in subject sequence (5).
8. There is a loss of time when changing semesters (2).
9. Emphasis on examinations may cause less depth in learning (2).
10. The semester system is harder on the poorer student and slow learners (7).
11. The students have a problem in adjusting to the longer study halls (9).
12. The semester system break is at the wrong time (3).
13. The semester system affects the extra-curricular programs (4).
14. The Examination Branch is slow in returning marks after the first semester finals (2).
15. There is less time to get to know the student (2).
16. There is a lack of preparation time for teachers (3).
17. There are increased discipline problems.

*The number in the parenthesis indicates the number of times this disadvantage was cited by the four categories of principals.

APPENDIX D

The frequency and percentage of the four categories of principals who did or did not consult their staff, their students and the parents concerning their opinion of the advantages and disadvantages of the semester system.

A. The Staff		Yes	No	Total N
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	25	3	28
	%	89.3	10.7	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	28	0	28
	%	100.0		
Partially semestered schools	N	53	3	56
	%	94.6		
Completely semestered schools	N	50	1	51
	%	98.0	2.0	
B. The Students				
Conventional schools not intending to semester	N	14	14	28
	%	50.0	50.0	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	20	8	28
	%	71.4	28.6	
Partially semestered schools	N	38	18	56
	%	67.9	32.1	
Completely semestered schools	N	39	12	51
	%	76.5	23.5	
C. The Parents				
Conventional Schools not intending to semester	N	13	15	28
	%	46.4	53.6	
Conventional schools intending to semester	N	10	18	28
	%	35.7	64.3	
Partially semestered schools	N	17	39	56
	%	30.4	69.6	
Completely semestered schools	N	31	19	50
	%	62.0	38.0	

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